# The Revolution of Imam Al-Husayn (as)

## Its Impact on the Consciousness of Muslim Society





Translator(s): I.K.A. Howard

Publisher(s): Muhammadi Trust of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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# Contents

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Its Impact on the Consciousness of Muslim SocietyThe impact of Karbala on the consciousness of Muslim society. Ziyara (pilgrimage), lamentation poetry, .remembering Imam Husayn (a), and weeping

Author(s): Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams ad-Din Al-Amili

**Publisher's Foreword**

**point**

We are pleased to present this book, The Revolution of al-Husayn: Its Impact on the Consciousness of Muslim Society, by Hujjat al-Islam Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, Vice-President of the Supreme Shi'ite Council in the Lebanon, to the

.reading public

**The Book**

Imam al-Husayn, peace be with him, created a momentous Islamic revolution, which has continued to live as history has gone by and still provides writers with vitality and inspiring material. Despite the passing of time, it is a revolutionary torch whose light guides revolutionaries and those who struggle to proclaim and support the truth and to resist and oppose the symbols of falsehood. For more than thirteen centuries, writers of different groups, inclinations and ideas have continued to write books and .studies about this revolution

Yet neither has its spring been exhausted nor have the streams which flow from it run dry. It is the same as it was at the blessed time it took place in terms of its great .significance

This book about the revolution of al-Husayn is considered one of the most original works on the subject, an originality which the author indicates in his

own preface. With this in mind, we wanted to have this work translated from its .original Arabic into English for two important purposes

Firstly, we wanted to make those non-Muslims, who only speak English in many parts of the world, aware of the eternal quality of al-Husayn's revolution so that they could .understand its social circumstances and its influence on men

This revolution is unique when considering the history of revolutions aimed at reforming society which abound in Islamic history, in terms of its ideology and its heroism. Similarly it represents the highest degree of self-sacrifice for the sake of .religious principles and to free man from slavery and individualistic despotism

Secondly, the secret of the lasting nature of this pioneering revolution, which, despite the passing of thirteen centuries still keeps alive the crucial position, which it had on the day it took place, as a vital agent in creating acts of heroism, embodying self-sacrifice and teaching men the way of noble sacrifice for the sake of achieving a noble .aim

The rising of al-Husayn was not merely a tragedy arising spontaneously out of the injustice of man. Nor was it a manifestation of family or personal struggle against the government or authority. It was much more exalted and greater than that. It was for the sake of preserving the Islamic religion and its great benefits for saving humanity .from persecution and slavery

## The Author

The author, Hujjat al-Islam Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, is one of the .scholars and illustrious personalities of the Ithna 'Ashari'Shi'ites

He is from a family whose roots in learning are deep, going back to al-Shahid al-Awwal, Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Makki al-'Amili (d.۷۸۶ A.H.) This family has been .well-known in Mount 'Amil in the Lebanon since the rise of scholarship in that region

The author was educated at the Religious College in Najaf where he studied the Arabic language, rhetoric, logic, jurisprudence, the principles of jurisprudence and Tradition under the great figures and teachers of that college. At the same time he .acquired great knowledge of literature, history and other aspects of human learning

However, he did not consolidate his great ability as a scholar and extend the area of his horizons until, after he had passed the first stage of the studies required for students of religious education, he moved on to the stage of being lectured directly by the mujtahids and marji's (the most important Shi'ite scholars who lead the Shi'ite .(community in all aspects of faith while the twelfth Imam is in occultation

Then he studied under such great authorities in the sciences of jurisprudence and the principles of jurisprudence as the late Ayatullah Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim and .Ayatullah Sayyid Abu'l Qasim al-Khu'i

He participated in the foundation of some of the cultural organizations in Najaf and the College of Law, where he gave lessons in Islamic history and jurisprudence. He represented the late Ayatullah Sayyid al-Hakim, for a number of years, in the province .of Diwaniyya, which is one of the important tribal provinces in Iraq

.He also took part in many of the religious and cultural celebrations in Iraq

After that he moved to Beirut in the Lebanon. There he worked with great effort to initiate cultural and religious schemes, especially in matters concerned with raising the standards in the south of the country. He was given the office of Vice-President of the Supreme Shi'ite Islamic Council. He has had to work there in a presidential .capacity since the disappearance of Musa al-Sadr

Despite his being occupied with events in the Lebanon and the civil war there, he has continued to support the Islamic Publishing House with his valuable works which give expression to basic Islamic ideals and spiritual direction to those setting out to study .Islamic culture

Among those works produced by Hujjat al-Islam Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din is this book, The Revolution of al-Husayn, which we present to the English reading public. We have every confidence that we have made a good choice. God, .may He be exalted, is the One Who guides in the right direction

The Muhammadi Trust

## Author's Preface

What is the significance of giving the quality of immortality to any one man, to any one historical event, or to any great accomplishment of mind and heart which one man ?has achieved

We constantly, or at least sometimes, feel the need for it. We go back to such an immortal man to read, to listen and to see his story, and we recall his life. We go back to such an immortal event so

that we can make it live again in our minds and hearts. We enrich our life by it, we ennoble our existence through it, and we illuminate our paths through it and its author. We go back to the glories of the human genius so that we may quench our .hearts' thirst for truth and beauty through them

How and why is immortality ordained for some men, or some events, or some great ?acts

.It is because they encompass the eternally living reality

There are men, events and impressions which are concerned with what is false, counterfeit and artificial. However, the latter will not endure in the life of man. Soon the false and the counterfeit in them will be revealed, and then people will dismiss .them from their lives which constantly seek to correct themselves

There are others which encompass only a limited extent of the reality. The life of such .a man is limited by his contribution to the life of man

There are others which encompass the eternal living reality which is associated with the unceasing creative activity of mind and heart. This is always immortal because it answers an increasing need in the mind and heart of man and in his greatest .aspirations and hopes

This is the factor which applies, with a miraculous exactitude, to al-Husayn and his revolution. We go back to him in all the stages of his life and we go back to him in the climax of that life, his revolution. We make it live again and

we try to understand it. We live with him in all its stages, from its beginning to its bloody but resplendent ending. We are affected by it because, after we have discovered it, we have discovered ourselves in it: we have discovered part of our heart, part of our aspirations, part of our humanity in it. From it we have heard more .than a call which summons the noblest things which human creativity encompasses

This is the underlying reason for the fact that his revolution has penetrated into the depths of the popular consciousness of the Islamic community, in general, and of Shi'ite Muslims, in particular, so that it has becomes part of the general cultural environment of a Shi'ite, which has shared, and continues to share even now, an important role in the formation of his cultural identity and his social and political .morality

We should observe that the revolution of al-Husayn, among all the revolutions in the history of Islam which, itself, abound in revolutions, is the only revolution whose memory is still as alive and fresh to Muslims in the present time as it was to Muslims in .the past

Of all the revolutions it is the only one which has entered into the depths of popular consciousness so that it has enriched it and been enriched by it. It has enriched popular consciousness by its slogans, its ideas, its morality and its noble aims. It has been enriched by popular consciousness by the latter's endeavours and aspirations through

.the ages

That is only because it is the matrix of revolutions in the history of Islam. It is, as we said in our book The Rising of al-Husayn: Its Social Circumstances and Its Human Effects, '...the spearhead in revolutionary history. It is the first revolution which mobilized people and set them on the long bloody path, the path of struggle, after they had been about to lose their spirit for struggle through the effects of the policy of (the Umayyads'.(١

It is the only one among the revolutions in Islamic history which has set in motion a torrent of poetic and intellectual creativity, which began in the year ٦١ A.H. and has not .ceased to the present day

This book is a pioneering attempt to study the existence of the revolution of Imam al-Husayn and its manifestations in popular consciousness. It follows my previous books :about the revolutions of al-Husayn

i) The Rising of al-Husayn: Its Social Circumstances and Its Human Effects(٢) and)

ii) The Supporters of al-Husayn: A Study of the Martyrs of the Revolution of al-) (Husayn – the Men and the Evidence.(٣

If God grants us success, a fourth book about the revolution of al-Husayn will follow these with the title, The Story of the Rising. With that our study of all aspects of the .revolution of al-Husayn will be complete

Then God willing, we shall be able to apply ourselves to the revolutions which follow al-Husayn's revolution, thereby fulfilling the promise we made in The Revolution of al-Husayn when



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Thawrat al-Husayn: Zurufuha al-Ijtima'iyya wa-Atharuha al-Insaniyya (٥th ed., - ١ .Beirut, ١٩٧٧), ٢٣٦

.Op.cit -٢

٣- Ansar al-Husayn: Dirasa ‘an Shuhada’ Thawrat al-Husayn – al-Rijal wa al-Dalalat (Beirut, ١٩٧٥).

we said: The study of Islamic history, by means of the revolution, will give a truer and more exact picture than what emerges when this history is studied in the traditional manner which has no difference between whether it is a study of epochs or ruling .dynasties

We pray to God Almighty that He makes this work of ours and our other works a step towards attaining His approval and that He accepts it favorably and makes it of use. .Praise be to God, Lord of the Universe

The Author

## Introduction

### I. Explanation of The Use of Terminology

Within the situation which existed, revolution at any time, or in any place, will have, political, social and economic causes, which impel a group of people to a movement-by force-against the existing situation, whether because that situation represents a deviation from an ideal which has been portrayed and is present in the faith of the umma, or because that situation does not respond to the aspirations of that group of .people who represent the elite within the umma

By its success or failure, a revolution will produce consequences. In the case of success the consequences will be represented by the change in the conceptions and institutions in the society. This will be accomplished by their transformation from their past form to the form put forward in the slogans of the revolutionaries when they embarked on their revolution. In the case of failure, the consequence will lead to the existing regime intensifying measures of repression in order to strengthen its foundations and make

the conceptions which it applies to society more deeply-rooted in terms of policy, the .economy, society and other matters of ordinary life

On rare occasions, failure of the revolution may lead to the existing regime changing some of its conceptions or altering some of its institutions to respond, in some measure, to some of the slogans of the revolutionaries, when it seems that there is something in that which will help its existence and supremacy, which will subdue the growing popular hostility to it, and which deprive its opponents of their propaganda .weapons

The skeleton of the revolution are the material events which occur in time and place. This is what general history is concerned to record. Since, however, these events are stripped of their relationship with the general mentality of the nation and their emotional effect on the umma and the way in which it understands them, they have .no significance and no meaning

Then they are something dead with no life and movement in them. Thus the events, in this respect, do not have any meaning to a man of thought. They may be an .entertaining story but they are not, in this respect, anything more than that

The flesh, sinews and blood of the events are the manifestations of their reflections in the general mentality of the umma and the reactions which the occurrence of the revolution produced in the lives of different groups, and then the reactions which the .revolution produced after it had occurred

From this standpoint, the revolution

whether a failure or a success - will be an influential and active element in its human - environment. From this standpoint, it will take its place in the living history of the umma, the history which has affected it and which is affected by it, the history which will endure in time, in place and in man and whose effect does not end with the end of .its time, or with the change of its place, or with the death of its hero

From this point of view, the revolution affects the umma and is affected by it. It affects the umma insofar as it offers to it-both leaders and followers-examples on whose pattern the umma may work out its positions to face the situations and .attitudes which it will be exposed to in its journey to the future

The revolution is affected by the umma insofar as the picture of the events in the general mentality of the umma is influenced by its psychological attitudes towards the misfortunes which may befall it, the victories which it may achieve, and the difficulties .which it may face and from which it may suffer

The events may change their composition in order to accord with the existing situation; the composition of the events may remain as they were but explanations for the events may be given which accord with the actual attitude in which men are now living. In these circumstances, they carry out what is termed the operation of ."ommission

At this point

it seems clear that history, in this respect, is something living which moves in the minds and emotions of the umma. It is not an inheritance by which a theoretical relationship connects it. The relationship which unites the umma and its history is, in this respect, a living relationship which reflects the interaction between the umma .and history in a continuous movement of give and take

In this way, history may be a spur to go forward into the future and a light which guides the umma in its advance towards the attainment of its aspirations. It may be a mirror of the spirit of the present time, through which the umma is living now, and a .justification for the situation to which it is shackled

This view of an historical event is what we term 'history in popular consciousness' and it is what we mean by 'the revolution of al-Husayn in popular consciousness', insofar as, in this study, we intend to investigate the reflections of the revolution in the behaviour of the umma, its attitude toward its events, the nature of its practice in keeping it alive, the quality of its association with it, how the events influence its psychological attitudes so that they transform and change the composition of these events or give them new meanings and explanations which are different from their .original meanings and significations

I hope that the study will present a faithful picture of the revolution of al-Husayn in Muslim consciousness, in a general way, and of

.Shi'ite Muslims, in particular

## II. The Attitude Towards The Revolution

### The Eve of the Revolution .۱

When people learnt of al-Husayn's determination to revolt, they took up three .different attitudes towards it

The first attitude was the attitude of the Shi'a of the Holy Family. It was to urge the revolution, to offer it promises of help and support and to undertake some actual .tasks for its sake

We find evidence for that in the event of al-Husayn's revolution when he refused to give the pledge of allegiance to Yazid ibn Mu'awiya and left Medina for Mecca. Indeed we find evidence for it even before the death of Mu'awiya, in the efforts of the Kufans to get al-Husayn to revolt and to rectify the situation-as they claimed-which had arisen as a result of the ratification of the peace treaty between Mu'awiya and Imam .al-Hasan ibn 'Ali

After the death of Mu'awiya, the assumption of office by Yazid and al-Husayn's departure for Mecca, letters from the leaders of the Shi'a came continually to him. Other leaders also participated in this call and this urging, and their letters came in abundance to him. They dissociated themselves from the Umayyad governor, al-Numan ibn Bashir al-Ansan, and then they gave a positive response to al-Husayn's messenger to them, Muslim ibn Aqil. Eighteen thousand of them pledged allegiance to .him

Many of them remained faithful to their attitude after the Umayyad regime had regained control over affairs in Kufa when the new governor, 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, arrived there and took over from al-Nu'man ibn Bashir. He exercised absolute authority over Kufa

with ferocity and speed. Some of them were paralysed by fear; some of them were imprisoned after the abortive movement of Muslim ibn 'Aqil in Kufa; some of them were prevented from joining al-Husayn by the blockade which 'Ubayd Allah set up around Kufa; while others, who were able to slip through the cordon which had been positioned around Kufa, joined al-Husayn at Karbala', fought with him and were .martyred in his presence

The second attitude is the attitude of members of the clan of the Hashimites and the attitude of some of the tribal leaders. As for the attitude of members of the clan of the Hashimites, it is portrayed by the words of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya and 'Abd .Allah ibn 'Abbas

On the eve of Imam al-Husayn's departure from Medina, Muhammad ibn al-Hanifiyya gave him the following advice: 'You should go to Mecca. If staying there provides you with security, that is what we want. If it should be otherwise, you should go to the land of Yemen. They are supporters of your grandfather, your father and your brother. They are better-natured and have kinder hearts ...'(١)

He received similar advice from 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas when 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas said in a conversation which took place between him and the Imam: 'I have learnt that you are setting out for Iraq. They are treacherous people and are only calling you to war. Do not hurry. If you refuse any other course but to fight against this tyrant and yet



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١- Al-Khwarizmi, al-Muwaffaq Ahmad al-Makki, Maqtal al-Husayn (Najaf ١٩٤٨) I, ١٨٧-٨.

are unwilling to stay in Mecca, then go to Yemen. Write to the people of Kufa and your supporters in Iraq that they should drive out their governor. If they do not do that, you should remain there until God sends His commandment, for there, there are fortresses and mountain paths.'(۱)

As for the attitude of those who were not members of the clan of Hashim, it is portrayed by the words of 'Abd Allah ibn Muti' al-'Adawi: 'O son of the Apostle of God, I remind you of God and of the sanctity of Islam lest it be defiled. I adjure you before God concerning the sanctity of the Apostle of God and the sanctity of the Arabs. By God, if you seek what the Umayyad clan has in their hands, it will kill you. If they kill you, they will never fear anyone after you. By God, it is the sanctity of Islam which will be defiled, the sanctity of Quraysh and the sanctity of the Arabs. Do not do it. Do not go to Kufa. Do not expose yourself to the Umayyad clan.'(۲)

In principle, these men agree with the revolution but they are concerned about its results. Some of them -like 'Abd Allah ibn Muti'- are absolutely certain of its failure and express their feelings of consternation and alarm at the Umayyad audacity against everything sacred which will follow this failure.

Others are doubtful about its result and advise him to take refuge in places and among groups



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۱ - Al-Mas'udi, 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Muruj al-Dhahab (Cairo ۱۹۴۸), III, ۶۴. Cf. al-Tabari, Ta'rikh al-Rusul wa-al-Muluk (Cairo, ۱۹۶۰-۴) V, ۳۸۳-۴ and al-Khawarizmi. op.cit., I, ۲۱۶. It appears that this attitude of Ibn 'Abbas we in response to Yazid ibn Mu'awiya who had asked him to stop al-Husayn from departing. Ibn 'Abbas had answered him with a letter in tactful tones in which he said: 'I hope that al-Husayn does not depart for something which you dislike. I will not give up in advising him in everything by which God may unite the affairs of the umma and tumult may be extinguished.' Ibn 'Asakir, Ta'rikh IV, ۲۲۱. This supports our view that the relationship between the 'Abbasids and the 'Alids was formal and opportunistic. Cf. our book Ansar al-Husayn (op.cit) ۱۸۶ ff.

٢- Al-Tabari, op.cit. V, ٣٩٥-٦.

.which will make the possibilities of success greater than the possibilities of failure

The third attitude is represented by 'Abd Allah ibn ' Umar and other such men of piety (!)(١) who have withdrawn from politics since the killing of 'Uthman under the slogan of keeping away from discord, even though, by this attitude of theirs, they have rendered a great service to the existing regime when they made themselves into a party which was impeding the progress of revolutionary forces in society under the .slogan of piety and keeping away from discord

Abd Allah ibn ' Umar said to Imam al-Husayn: 'Abu 'Abd Allah, you know the hostility of' this clan towards you and their injustice to you. The people have given authority to this man, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya. I cannot be sure that the people would not favour him because of gold and silver (which he has given them) so that they would fight against you and thus many men would be destroyed through you. I advise you to enter into the agreement which the people entered into and to be patient as you were patient '.before

Abd Allah ibn ' Umar and other such holders of this view were not from the Shi'a of the' Holy Family. Nor were they members of that second group which believed in the justice of the revolution as a principle. In outward appearance at least, they were not supporters of the regime. They were only looking hostility at the revolution by starting out with



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١ - Among these were Anas ibn Malik, Zayd ibn Arqam, al-Hasan al-Basri and others .like them

a basic attitude in their public and private lives, which was the maintenance and acceptance of the status quo, not because it was just, but only because it existed, and .because any change would not agree with their temperaments and interests

### The Aftermath of the Revolution .۲

The Muslims faced the distressing end of the revolution and the consequences which .followed (including the cutting off of heads and captivity) with three attitudes

The first attitude was the attitude of the Shi'a of the Holy Family. They received the distressing end with sadness, regret and anger: they were sad because of the atrocity which had taken place at Karbala'; they felt regret because they had been remiss in their help and support; and they were angry with the Umayyad regime because it had .committed a dreadful crime

The interaction of grief with sadness generated in them extreme anger and a burning desire to atone, which they expressed against the regime and its supporters in poetry and speeches, and in revolutions which continued through generations. The slogan, 'Vengeance for al-Husayn', became a slogan for all revolutionaries against the .Umayyads

The second attitude was the attitude of the general body of Muslims who were not .committed to the political policy of the Shi'a and the Imams of the Holy Family

These met the disaster with shock and revulsion. The Umayyad techniques of dealing with their political opponents, as revealed in their suppression of the revolution, appalled them. These techniques showed no respect to law or morality, nor did they set any store in social

.norms

There is no doubt that this discovery prompted many of the tribal and communal leaders to reconsider their attitude and friendship towards the Umayyad regime. Among such men was 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Hurr al-Ju'fi who changed from being a supporter of the regime, who had refused to answer the summons of al-Husayn when the latter had asked him to help him, by becoming a revolutionary against the regime, who wrote poems of lament about the martyrs of Karbala' and proclaimed (rebellion.(١

Even the so-called pious who had received the decision to revolt with lassitude and had given advice to stop it, even these men, were not able to maintain their previous negative attitude towards the revolution and were forced to follow popular opinion by showing shock and revulsion. Zayd ibn Arqam had been one of those present at 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad's assembly in Kufa when the prisoners and the heads of the .martyrs were brought in

He wept when he saw Ibn Ziyad poking at the teeth of Imam al-Husayn with a cane in his hand. When Ibn Ziyad rebuked him for weeping and threatened him, he declared: 'O people ... you will be slaves after today. You have killed the son of Fatima, and you have given power to Ibn Murjana (i.e. Ibn Ziyad). By God, the best of your men have been killed, and the worst of them have become masters. May God destroy those who '!consent to humiliation and shame

When al-Hasan al-Basri learnt of al-Husayn's martyrdom, he



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.Al-Tabari, op.cit. V -١

said: 'How despicable is an umma which has killed the son of the daughter of its '!Prophet

The third attitude was the attitude of adherents of the regime. These men received the news of the end of the revolution with joy and delight. They demonstrated their feelings of comfort and elation. Some of them could not desist from showing feelings .of revenge and gloating

Yazid ibn Mu'awiya showed his feeling of happiness and elation. Indeed it seems that he made the coming of the prisoners into an occasion for popular merriment in which music and songs were used.(١) He could not hide his delight when the prisoners and .the head of Imam al-Husayn were brought into him amid a lavish assembly

The same is the case with regard to the rest of the members of the regime, like 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, Marwan ibn al-Hakam, 'Amr ibn Sa'id b. al-'As and others. They expressed their delight in expressions which narrators have recorded and historians (have reported.(٢

Soon, however, the adherents of the regime discovered that the matter did not give rise to happiness. It was not the simple matter which they had envisaged. This revolution was not just a simple insurrection which could easily be put to an end, and .then the regime would rid of its dangers

The members of the regime discovered that the failure of the revolution generated dangers which were much greater than those which had existed before. The whole situation exploded. The failure of the revolution made the Shi'a of



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١- Al-Shaykh al-Saduq, Amali, ١٠٠; Majlis, ٣١; al-Khawarizmi, op.cit. II, ٦٠, 'The people came out with tambourines and trumpets. They were happy and joyful.'

٢- One of the worst examples of malicious joy is that of 'Amr ibn Sa'id ib al-'As, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya's governor in Medina. When the death of al-Husayn was announced in Medina and people knew about it, the people of Medina were in great commotion.

Never was such lamentation heard as the lamentation of the Hashimite women for al-Husayn. The daughter of ‘Aqil ibn Abi Talib came out distressed with her womenfolk with her. She was twisting herself in grief in her dress as she recited: ‘What would you say if the Prophet asked you: What have you, the last umma, done with my offspring and my family after my departure from them? Some of them are prisoners, some of them are stained with blood.’ When ‘Amr heard these voices, he laughed and recited: ‘Then the women of the tribe of Ziyad raised a great lament like the lament of our women mourning after the battle of al-Arnab.’ Then he said: ‘This lamentation is in return for the lamentation for ‘Uthman.’ (Al-Tabari, op.cit., V, ۳۵۶-۷; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, III, ۳۰۰).

the Holy Family become much firmer in their attitude whereas before, during the reign of Mu’awiya, they had been more inclined to peaceful negotiations and .forbearance

Similarly in a way which got talked about so that Muslims heard it from one another, the purifying effect of the revolution produced a great change in the attitude of large numbers of the Muslims towards the Umayyads and their government. We consider that this change made these groups equipped to adopt effective negative policies against the regime after their psychological attitude against the regime had .developed

When the Umayyads discovered this new situation, they began to take practical measures aimed at destroying the effect of this psychological activity which the revolution had produced in the community. This activity had begun to turn the umma away from friendship with the regime to the public declaration of attitudes which .resisted it and its institutions and policies

Yet the adherents of the regime discovered the danger of the spiritual forces, which were unleashed as a result of putting down the revolution by the savage method which had been followed, and they brought into play every means of seduction and intimidation which they possessed in order to prevent these forces from working .against the regime

In contrast to that, the Shi'ite leadership with the Imams at its head had also discovered the awesome powers, which the revolution had mobilized to work against the Umayyads and annihilate their regime, and new circumstances which were appropriate to the success of this

work. This leadership prepared to use its energies against Umayyad activities, by aiming at releasing the rays of the revolution and spreading its psychological .influence among the umma to the furthest extent and the widest range

In the rest of this chapter we will present a brief picture of the Umayyad activities which were aimed at thwarting the transforming effect of the revolution within the umma in order to move from that to the presentation of a detailed study of the efforts of the Shi'ite leaders, with the Imams of the Holy Family at their head, which resisted Umayyad activities and which aimed at stimulating the activity of the revolution to .change the umma from friendship with the Umayyads and to rally against them

We will see that the activities of the Shi'ite leadership were the ones for which success .was ordained in the end

## III. The Motives And Aims Which The Revolution Implanted In Popular Consciousness

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The efforts of the Umayyads to frustrate the activity of the revolution in the nation :are represented by two tendencies

### The First Tendency

Among the realities of the history of the revolution of al-Husayn is that Yazid ibn Mu'awiya had the primary responsibility for what had happened at Karbala'. He received the dreadful result with happiness and joy. He did not show any opposition to the methods which Ibn Ziyad employed to deal with the revolutionaries. Rather he was at one with him through issuing directives about the nature of this method. When, however, the consequences of the crime were revealed, he attempted to shirk the .responsibility for them

Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad'

admitted to Musafir ibn Shurayh al-Bakri in a conversation between them: 'Yazid indicated to me that either al-Husayn was killed or I was. I chose to kill him.'(۱)

The historians have reported: When the head of al-Husayn was brought to Yazid, the position of Ibn Ziyad became high in his estimation. He loaded him with blessing, made gifts to him and was pleased with him for what he had done. It was not much later when he learnt of the people's abhorrence for the act, and their cursing and reviling it that he regretted the killing of al-Husayn.(۲)

He said to al-Nu'man ibn Bashir al-Ansari: 'Praise be to God who killed al-Husayn."(۳)

This reality prompted those in charge of the Umayyad regime to make efforts aimed at removing the responsibility for the suppression of the revolution by the savage method which had been used at Karbala' from the Umayyad regime and from Yazid, and putting the responsibility for that on specific adherents of the regime and essentially on 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad. In that way the spirit of hostility and indignation was directed against one man, and not against its great symbolic figure and its leader, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya.

The researchers will find some traces of this tendency in some of the reporters. Among them is Ibn Hajar al-Haythami who went so far as to claim that Yazid was not pleased that al-Husayn was killed and had not ordered that to happen.(۴)

It appears that the practical efforts made on this course were concentrated



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۱- Ibn al-Athir, op.cit., IV, ۱۴۰.

۲- Ibn al-Athir, op.cit., III, ۳۰۰; al-Siyuti, Ta'rikh al-Khulafa', ۳۰۸.

۳- Al-Khawarizmi, op.cit., II, ۵۹.

۴- Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, al-Fatawi al-Hadithiyya, ۱۹۳, quoting the account of the death of al-Husayn of 'Abd al-Razaq al-Muqrim.

on Iraq and the Hijaz, and not the Syrian area, for there the Umayyads had laid down (that ١٠th Muharram should be a day of festival, of happiness and of rejoicing.(١

This attempt failed, and public opinion did not absolve Yazid and his regime of the crime, even though -after the Shi'ite tendency had become stronger and had expressed itself by carrying out the slogans of al-Husayn- some of the later men of religion utilized this Umayyad attempt to absolve Yazid and would not allow anything bad to be said about Yazid.(٢) Public opinion, however, was against this attempt. Therefore no success was ordained for it and it did not leave any mark in popular consciousness. Rather in this popular consciousness, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya remained (the symbol of a great and hideous crime.(٣

### The Second Tendency

The second tendency was to distort the revolution. Because of that it was more .serious than the first tendency

This tendency shows itself in two forms within the framework of the texts which have .come to us

First of all, it is the portrayal to public opinion of al-Husayn as some one seeking a worldly kingdom. Thus, his aim in his revolution was not one which was universal, religious and Islamic but only a personal aim. When he despaired of achieving his .objective, he showed himself ready to submit and surrender

The manifestation of this is reflected in the account in which it is reported that al-Husayn said to 'Umar ibn Sa'd: 'Come with me to Yazid so that I may put



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١ - - Al-Sayyid al-Muhsin al-Amin in his book Iqna' al-La'im quotes the text of al-Maqrizi's al-Khitat (II, ٣٨٥): Afterwards al-Maqrizi says that the 'Alids in Egypt used to keep the Day of 'Ashura' as a day of grief on which all markets were shut. When the government was changed, the Ayyubid rulers kept the Day of 'Ashura' as a day of rejoicing on which they were generous to the poor and spread out great banquets

where they took sweet food and used new utensils. They would adorn themselves and take baths, following the practice of the Syrians which al-Hajjaj introduced to them in the reign of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan in order to humiliate the Shi'a of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, who had made the day of 'Ashura' a day of mourning and grief for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali because he had been killed on it... We can understand the rest of the actions of the Ayyubids in making the Day of 'Ashura' a day of rejoicing and entertainment... Al-Sayyid al-Amin has reported elsewhere in his book Iqna' al-La'im: The truth is that those who introduced feasts of celebration on the Day of 'Ashura' were the Umayyads and their followers from the time of Yazid, and not just specifically al-Hajjaj. When the Companion of the Prophet, Sahl ibn Sa'd, arrived in Syria, he saw that they had hung curtains, screens and silks, while they were rejoicing and happy. With them were women playing tambourines and drums. He said to himself: 'I wonder if the Syrians have a festival which we do not know about!' Then he learnt that that was because the head of al-Husayn had been brought, and he was .shocked

Abd al-Mughith ibn Zuhayr ibn 'Alawi al-Harbi wrote a book on the virtues of Yazid' -۲ ibn Mu'awiya, in which he forbade the cursing of Yazid ibn Mu'awiya. Ibn al-Jawzi refuted him in a book called The Refutation of the Obstinate Bigotry of Prohibiting the .Cursing of Yazid. Cf. Ibn Rajab, Tabaqat al-Hanabila, I, ۳۵۶

It is reported that a man referred to Yazid as the Commander of the faithful in the -۳ presence of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. The latter ordained him to be given twenty lashes for giving Yazid such an honour. Cf. Ibn Taghri Burdi, al-Nujum al-Zahira (Cairo) I, ۱۶۳. Abu Shama reported in Rijal al-Qarnayn (p.۷) in the events of the year ۵۹۰ A.H: Ahmad ibn Isma'il ibn Yusuf al-Qazwini can to Baghdad and preached in the Nizamiyya. On the Day of 'Ashura', he was asked to curse Yazid. He replied that that man had been an Imam who had used his reason to arrive at appropriate actions. One of the people attacked him, and he was almost killed when he fell from the pulpit. They exiled him to Qazwin and he died there in ۵۹۰. Ibn Taghri Burdi has mentioned in al-Nujum al-Zahira (op.cit., VI, ۱۳۴) in the events of the year ۵۹۰ that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Qazwini referred to Yazid as Commander of the faithful. The scholars issued legal judgments .against him for honouring Yazid, and he was expelled from Baghdad to Qazwin

my hand in his hand.' The evidence for the falseness of this report is the proof which many historians report from ' Uqba ibn Sim’an. The latter was the servant of al-Rabab, the wife of Imam al-Husayn, and one of the few men who survived the .'slaughter at Karbala

Therefore he is an eyewitness. He said: 'I accompanied al-Husayn from Medina to Mecca and then from Mecca to Iraq. I did not separate from him until he was killed. I heard all the conversations he conducted with the people right up to the day of his death. By God, he did not give them any reason for what the people are telling each other about him saying that he would put his hand in the hand of Yazid, nor that they should let him go to one of the frontier-posts of the Muslims. He said, "Leave me and I will return to the land from which I came, or leave me and I will go in this broad land until we see what the decision of the people comes to." However, they would not do '.so

The fact that this attempt had met with some degree of success had made 'Uqba ibn Sim'an say: '... He did not give them any reason for what the people are telling each '...other

It seems, however, that this attempt failed to achieve any success worth mentioning .after eyewitnesses applied themselves to disproving and refuting it

Secondly, the tendency showed itself in the portrayal to public opinion

of al-Husayn and his followers as Kharijites, or as sinners who had rebelled against the constitution and constitutionality as represented by Yazid ibn Mu'awiya: they have revolted against their Imam, renounced their allegiance and spread discord on the .umma

Ibn Ziyad, from the time he arrived in Kufa and took charge of the suppression of the movement of Muslim ibn 'Aqil, had attempted to leave an impression in the minds of the people that the movement was the handiwork of the Kharijites and the (Harurites.(۱

There is no doubt that the efforts made to give the revolution of al-Husayn this characteristic became more serious and intense in order to produce reactions in the .masses

This attempt did not succeed in winning credibility with the masses. Instead of putting the revolution of al-Husayn outside constitutionality, the Umayyad regime, in its entirety, was put outside constitutionality, and increasing numbers of people rejected it after the extent of its distance from the truth in its claim to represent Islam became .understood through the effect of the revolt of al-Husayn

The growth of the Shi'ite entity after the Umayyads, the prominence of the Shi'a in political attitudes which were opposed to the political system, and the 'Abbasid recourse to nourishing juristic and theological tendencies which were opposed to any Shi'ite tendency produced a sectarian situation which prompted some jurists, traditionists and theologians to gratify the impulses of fanatical rulers and some .fanatical extremists among the general body with despicable sectarian ideas

These ideas were recorded and clearly and



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Al-Tabari, op.cit., V, ۳۵۹. Ibn Ziyad demanded that the officials of the Government -۱ administration write down their names for him of those, in their administrative sections ('asha'ir), who were Harurites and suspicious people. Later Ibn Ziyad

.accused Hani b. 'Urwa of being a Harurite. Cf. al-Tabari, op.cit., V, ٣٦٧

decisively exposed by the important jurists, traditionists and theologians. Among these despicable sectarian ideas was the attempt to give a quality of constitutionality to the conduct of Yazid and the Umayyad regime against the revolution of al-Husayn, and to take away any quality of constitutionality from al-Husayn's revolution. In what .follows, we will mention some of these attempts

Among these ideas is the idea of Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, in his book, al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, where he said of al-Husayn: 'No one went against him (i.e. al-Husayn) except by using their ability to understand. They only fought him because of what they had heard from his grandfather, the master of apostles, who had informed them about the corruption of the situation and warned them against entering into discords. .His statements about that are numerous

Among them is that he said: "There will be lamentations and lamentations. Strike down anyone who wants to divide the authority of this umma, while it is united, whoever they may be." The people only went out against him with this or its like in (their minds.'(١

Ibn al-Jawzi has stated in his book, al-Sirr al-Masun: 'Among the common beliefs which have prevailed among a group of those who associate themselves with the Sunna is that they maintain that Yazid was in the right, and al-Husayn was in the wrong in revolting against him ... Only a non-Shi'ite who was ignorant of the practice of the Prophet, would be inclined to such a view and would think that



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١ - - Abu Bakr ibn al-‘Arabi, al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, edited by Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib (١٣٧١) ٢٣٢.

(he could anger the Rafidites (i.e. the Shi'a) by that.'(۱)

Al-Shawkani has said: 'Some scholars have gone too far and judged that al-Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, should have been content with the drunkard who was violating the sanctity of the sacred law, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya. May God curse them! How strange are such statements when they are laid bare. Rocks would split apart at (hearing them.'(۲)

These ideas reflect a hostile attitude towards the revolution of al-Husayn in the popular consciousness of an insignificant group of Muslims. This attitude grew out of the efforts of the Umayyads and their propaganda apparatus. Soon, however, it was an attitude which had lost its supporters in Muslim circles, and there was no longer anyone who held it. The scholars and leaders of thought used to record it merely for .the purpose of recording their rejection and revulsion of it

Among those who have done so in the modern era is Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh, when he wrote: 'When one finds in the world a just government which maintains the sacred law and an unjust government which paralyses it, it is necessary for every Muslim to support the former ... In this category is the revolt of Imam al-Husayn, the grandson of the Apostle, against the leader of tyranny and injustice, who had gained control of the government of the Muslims by force and deceit, namely, Yazid ibn Mu' awiya, may God desert him and may God desert those Karamiyya and haters of 'Ali who



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۱- .Cited by Ibn Muflih al-Hanbali, al-Furu', III, ۵۴۸

۲- .Al-Shawkani, Nayl al-Awtar, V, ۱۴۷

'.supported him

This attitude began to be recorded as past dead history to arouse scorn and amazement at the rigid mentalities of men who were incapable of originality in though that they took refuge with strange ideas for their attitude. Perhaps that might achieve some of the commotion for them, which they imagined to be the fame which their sinews burned, in vain, to attain. As a result of their blind desire for the spreading of their reputation, they fell into the same sort of quagmires in which the supporters of .Yazid wallow

The true attitude, which still throbs with life, is the attitude which has, from the year ۶۱ and still is even now, put its roots deep in the popular consciousness of all the Muslims in general and of Shi'ite Muslims in particular. It is the necessity, dedication and inspiration of the revolution. It is the attitude which is necessary for every free man and every man who thinks, who has become aware of the real nature of al-Husayn's .revolution

The revolution of al-Husayn has won its war against Umayyad distortion and has entered firmly and deeply into popular consciousness. On the one hand, that is because of its truth and purity. On the other hand, it is because of the efforts of Shi'ite .leadership - and that is what we will explain in what follows

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Against Umayyad attempts aimed at frustrating the effect of the revolution on the umma- attempts which as we have already seen failed desperately- there

were the efforts of the Shi'ite leadership aimed at activating the effect of the .revolution in the umma

Before entering into a discussion of the details of the Shi'ite leadership's efforts in this field, we must know the motives which impel this leadership to adopt this attitude in .the course of Islamic history

Will we find these motives in the emotions of love and hatred? Will we find them in a personal attitude towards the Umayyads through considering them as a family who ?were hostile to the Hashimites because of historical interventions

On this basis, the Hashimites would have been motivated and would have motivated .their Shi'a, to gratify the feeling of hatred which they bore against the Umayyads

Or do we find the motives in the political advantages of the Hashimites in terms of the fact that the Umayyads had competed with the Hashimites for government after Umar ibn al-Khattab and beaten them to it? Then they would have been motivated, and would have motivated their Shi'a, against the Umayyads in order to pursue government as being a political authority which would consolidate the dominion of one family of Quraysh over the fate of the Muslims at the expense of another family .of Quraysh

If we deal with this problem superficially, there is scope for imagining that emotional or political motives, or both, were the things which impelled the Shi'ite leadership to strive to activate the effect of the revolution on the umma. The scope for imagining this is vast, for this is the

.kind of thing which accords with human nature at every age

Any objective and deliberate study of this problem, however, will confirm to us the superficiality of the explanation, based on emotion and advantage, for the motives of the Shi'ite leadership in their attitude. It would also reveal other motives which were the basic instigation for the Shi'ite leadership to adopt this attitude towards al-Husayn's revolution.

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When we examine the attitude of the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, towards the Caliphs who preceded him, we find that he relinquished his personal emotions and interests and the interests of his family in order to support the state and mission of Islam. If he had wanted to serve his own interests and emotions, he could have brought about a harmful political struggle within the state, which may have enabled him to gain power. He did not do that, however, not because he was unable to stir up such a struggle, but only because he preferred the interest of Islam in the political unity of the Muslims.

After the incident at the Saqifa, he refused to respond to the call by Abu Sufyan, which was supported by al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and in which he urged him to resist the decision taken in the meeting at the Saqifa. He answered: 'The safety of the religion is something which we love more.'

Similarly he announced his acceptance of the result which came from the consultative council, even though he registered his disapproval of

it, for he said: 'I submit to what the affairs of the Muslims have submitted, even while (there is only injustice against me, in particular, in them.'(۱)

When he was invested with the caliphate, and his political rivals split the unity of the Muslims through their rebellion in Mecca, and then in Basra, he was compelled to struggle in order to preserve the unity of the Muslims by the peaceful means which his opponents refused to respond to. They forced him to fight against them in order to .preserve Islamic unity

When he brought the rebellion to an end and started to build the model state, the Umayyad party under the leadership of Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan revealed its intentions aimed at destroying the unity of the Muslims and at changing Islam into an institution which served the interests of a class of exploiters at the expense of the .interests of the umma

At this point 'Ali b. Abi Talib struggled for a long time by peaceful means to attain a framework, which would preserve the unity of the Muslims and which would enable him to realize his dream of building a just state. He failed, however, because of his opponents' persistence in their separatist attitude. Then the Imam was forced to enter into war to protect the unity of the Muslims and to preserve Islam from the .fraudulent interpretation of its principles

(He constantly declared his aims in embarking on this struggle.(۲)

.Imam 'Ali was martyred and the struggle went on

Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali



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.Nahj al-Balagha, (published by Dar al-Andalus, Beirut), I, ۵۱ -۱

.Evidence for that can be found throughout Nahj al-Balagha -۲

assumed authority after his father. He declared that he would adhere to the aims for which Imam 'Ali had striven, and made strenuous efforts to safeguard the political unity of the Muslims through negotiation but he had no better fortune in this matter than his father. Indeed his opponents became more resolute in their attitudes as a result of their realization of the weakness of his position through the spreading of a .defeatist spirit among the leaders of Iraqi society at that time

After despairing of gaining any benefit from negotiations, he attempted to follow the policy of Imam 'Ali to protect the unity of the Muslims by force of arms. He discovered, however, that he was in a desperate situation and that new considerations in society made it impossible for him to engage in a successful war. Therefore he chose to preserve the unity of the Muslim under the auspices of the authority of his political rival, Mu'awiya, after having made the most prudent provisions possible for all the .Muslims

He chose to do this against his personal and family interests and feeling. Otherwise, he would have been able, by taking certain measures, to have remained in his position and embarked on a long-term war which would have been in his personal and family .interests but would have brought dire consequences to the Muslims

As a result of his conduct as a principled statesman, and not as an opportunistic politician, he faced severe and painful Shi'ite opposition which the leaders of his

followers proclaimed according to their feelings. Yet he endured them patiently and began to explain to these men that he had taken this painful position with regard to himself personally out of his anxiety for them and the general body of the Muslims.

When Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali died as a martyr through the deception of his rival, Mu'awiya, Imam al-Husayn remained for a long period during the reign of Mu'awiya, inactive and quiet, not calling for a revolution because of his concern for the unity of the Muslims. Nonetheless he would have been able to raise a large number of people against Mu'awiya, who was hateful to him and contradicted his own interests and his family's. However, he did not, even though he did not refrain from criticizing the policies and excesses of Mu'awiya.

When, finally, he did rise up against Umayyad rule as represented by Yazid b. Mu'awiya and his regime, his rising was not to serve his own interests and emotions. His personal history and the history of his father and brother were testimony that their stand was always taken in the higher interest of Islam and the interests of the Muslims from all aspects.

From the time of Mu'awiya's announcement that his son Yazid was his heir apparent, Imam al-Husayn – along with other leading Muslims - looked ahead in dismay to the time when Yazid would have authority over the umma and take control as Caliph over the Muslims.

He – along with other leading

Muslims – saw that if, after Yazid b. Mu'awiya attained power, his rule gained legitimacy , even if through silence, then it would be a danger for Islam as a religion and a divine call. It was clear from the beginning that Yazid's regime would not be content with mere silence from al-Husayn and other influential Muslims. Rather it would want a clear and formal acknowledgement of his legitimacy; it would want allegiance to be paid to Yazid.

Thus it became clear to all that safeguarding the political unity of the Muslims would mean abandoning the ideological and legislative content of the Islamic political institution. Sacrificing the political unity of the Muslims had become obligatory in order to safeguard the ideology, Shari'ah and path of Islam, after the Umayyad rule had begun to represent a danger not only to the political unity of the Muslims but to Islam itself.

As we clarified in detail in our book The Revolution of al-Husayn: Its Social Circumstances and Its Human Effects,(١) it was known that his revolution was one of self-sacrifice which would not lead him to any effective political support. It was only drawing the attention of the umma to the danger, setting it towards confronting that danger and releasing in it the power of the revolution and the spirit of refusal by compelling the government to maintain some regard for the principles of Islam in its policies, even at a minimal level.

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The consideration of the problem of



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١ - Thawrat al-Husayn: Zurufuha al-Ijtima'iya wa-Atharuha al-Insaniya (٥th ed., Beirut, ١٩٧٧), ٢٣٦.

the motives of the Shi'ite leadership, and at their head the Imams of the Holy Family, to strive to release the rays of al-Husayn's revolution in the umma in the light of this fact, will show us that these motives were not emotional, arising out of the Hashimites' hatred of the Umayyads, nor based on self-interest, arising out of the .struggle for government in terms of worldly domination

The proven history of the Imams of the Holy Family -as we have seen- demonstrates that this was not their idea. It, further, establishes that their lives were a continuous chain of sacrifices for the public good. They were only overcome by their Umayyad rivals in the political battles because, in their dealings with the umma, with their rivals and with their supporters, they always followed principles and standards which rose .out of their feelings of Islamic responsibility of the first degree

It is sufficient here to mention, in addition to the proven history, that Imam Zayn al-'Abidin 'Ali ibn al-Husayn who himself witnessed the atrocity of Karbala' and lived it, hour after hour, with all its pain and sorrow, used to pray for the frontier fighters, the soldiers of the Umayyad regime, who had perpetrated the crime of Karbala', captured .him with his aunts, sisters and other womenfolk, and imprisoned him

That prayer of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin was only because of his consciousness of the role of the armies of the frontier in defending Islamic society from its enemies, even though that army

.also used to protect the regime of the Umayyads

The motives of the Imams of the Holy Family and the other Shi'ite leadership sprung out of the fact that the revolution of al-Husayn -in terms of representing a defense of the essence and qualities of Islam and in terms of its aim to require the regime to be faithful in applying Islam to the life of the nation- that revolution, for both reasons, had to be spread and made influential in the minds of Muslims, so that, by keeping it .alive, it would be a constant incentive to a Muslim to be watchful and critical

Thus, when revolution becomes a necessity in order to preserve the unity of the Muslims and the integrity of the application of Islam, he will arise. In this way his association with its principles and slogans is assured so that it attaches him to Islam, .and he does not deviate from it, nor does he turn away from its guidance

From this starting point, we shall study the manifestation of the escorts of the Shi'ite leadership and at their head the Imams of the Holy Family, to release the rays of al-Husayn's revolution to the furthest extent and the widest scope in the life of the .umma

## IV. The Ways the Revolution Flowed Into Popular Consciousness

### point

Before embarking on the study of the manifestations of the expression of popular consciousness through the influence of al-Husayn's revolution upon it-both with the Muslims, in general, and the Shi'ite Muslims, in particular, I feel I ought to indicate the ways

in which this revolution entered so deeply and comprehensively into popular consciousness, and developed its expression in celebratory manifestations and artistic works, especially in poetry.

Here the indication of these ways will be brief because the following chapters in the book and the studies which they include, will guarantee that sufficient details will be given to the reader to illuminate the subject in all its aspects.

Among the ways in which al-Husayn's revolution entered into popular consciousness and developed and grew, there are the following:

#### The Doctrinal Factor

The revolution of al-Husayn was an Islamic movement, which one of the great leaders of Islam undertook. When the Muslims differ about the degree of his sanctity-some of them holding the view that he was an infallible Imam, while others holding the view that he was a little less than that-they never differ that it was his right, even his duty, to correct the theoretical and practical deviations into which the rulers had fallen; and that it was his right, even his duty, to strive to assume power in the service of this objective.

It was, then, a revolution which the principles and laws of Islam demanded to be undertaken for the purpose of warning the umma of the evil situation which it was in, and making it improve this by setting its Islamic personality in the face of a deviating ruler. That was by correcting the policy of this ruler.

It was not a tribal or regional or sectarian movement. Here it is not possible to consider it as

a sectarian inheritance of the Shi'a, because its sectarian hue came as a result of historical factors which are beyond the scope of this study.

At that time all the Islamic leadership understood and were aware of the comprehensive nature-both political and cultural- of the identity of the revolution and the fact that it belonged to the whole of Islam. This is what made the revolution-the men involved and the events enter widely into popular consciousness as a celebration of sanctity.

It gained respect and love even from the most savage and bitter enemies of the Imams of the Holy Family, namely the Kharijites. Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin reports in his book, Iqna'al-La'im: 'We learnt that the Kharijites of the Ibadite group in Zingibar perform ceremonies of grief on the day of 'Ashura', not ceremonies of festivals. In the same measure as they hate 'Ali and his son, al-Hasan, they love al-Husayn because of him rising with the sword and resisting oppression.'(١)

### The Call of the Holy Family

The Imams of the Holy Family were anxious to keep the revolution and its hideous details alive in the general mind of the nation. That was done by encouraging the composition and recitation of poetry about it, by their holding special gatherings to listen to it, and by their calling for gatherings and meetings to be held dedicated to the study of the events of the revolution, by the institution of the ritual of pilgrimage (ziyara), and by other directives than the ones we have mentioned which all served one aim,



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١- Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, Iqna' al-La'im, op.cit., ٢١١.

.namely to keep the revolution alive in men's minds and hearts

.The goals of this call will be classified in greater detail in coming studies in the book

If the doctrinal factor had enabled the revolution to enter into the popular consciousness of the nation generally, the call of the Imams of the Holy Family very much strengthened the effectiveness in the doctrinal factor in the mind of the umma, .even though the influence of this call on the umma had differing force

The revolution had decisive influence on the Shi'a of the Holy Family and those who shared their affection from the point of view of their love for the Imams of the Holy Family in terms of considering them as the most trustworthy, sincere and understanding representatives of Islam. The nature of this influence was no less .important for the rest of the Muslims

### The Nature of the Tragedy

From its beginning to its end, the revolution was so appalling as to raise deep grief and distress. From there, it came to enjoy an extraordinary attraction which raised it .to a human level in addition to its religious goal

Al-Husayn's revolution represented the eternal human dialectic between good and evil, between nobility and baseness, between political expediency and moral idealism, between the tribal ethos and the rational conscience which aspires to the formation of .an integrated umma, between mercenary man and a man of principle

The intensity of the struggle impelled each one the contrasting theses of the dialectic ,to express itself and its vision with absolute clarity

in the course of a continuous exercise in which revolution represented the nobility and the ideal humanity of the revolutionaries, and the Umayyad regime represented .man's worst endeavours and lowest methods

The nature of this tragedy captivated every man who read about it or heard about it. Then, in addition to Muslims, non-Muslims were also affected by it, both at the level of ordinary people and of men of culture. This was the case in the past and it still .continues right up to the present

How numerous are the creative works of poetry, which non-Muslims have composed and in which they express their emotions about his revolution, its heroes, its events and its aims. How numerous are the manifestations of the rites of remembrance which non-Muslims undertake in some areas (the Indian sub-continent, for example) .to express their veneration for the revolution and their respect for its heroes

### The Psychological Situation of the Shi'ite Muslim

From the time of Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, the Shi'ite Muslim has endured different kinds of persecution, harassment and terrorization. He has been pursued by the authorities and has seldom felt secure. These authorities have waged war against the resources of life when they have failed to annihilate him and impede his freedom. In .the best of circumstances he was a second-class citizen

All of this was because of one of his doctrinal views, namely the Imamate, and because of his legal tendency in terms of his following the Imams of the Holy Family, .for they were the guides in the law of Islam

The

tragic situation for the Shi'ite has continued for long periods. Out of this situation, under which generations after generations have lived and died, a man has emerged who carries, in the depths of his being, a feeling of sorrow and a spirit of revolution. This situation has made him keep close to his historical symbols, in the vanguard of which is the revolution of Imam al-Husayn, in particular, and the history of the Imams, .in general

The attitude of most of the authorities, which govern in the Islamic world, has strengthened this psychological situation, across the centuries, to keep the memory of Imam al-Husayn alive or to make a pilgrimage (ziyara) to his grave. These authorities have persisted in making public their disapproval of these practices which .the Shi'ite has continued to carry out

They have put obstacles before his freedom to carry these practices out. Their attitude has varied between complete prohibition, under penalty of death, imprisonment or confiscation for anyone who practices any intellectual, cultural, artistic and remembrance activity connected with al-Husayn's revolution, and between laying down legal limits on the freedom of movement and expression in this .field

In the coming chapters we will see how this attitude, which was opposed to any expression of the existence of al-Husayn's revolution in popular consciousness, was .an established policy of many of the governments in many of the Islamic countries

The ruling authorities, who adhered to this or that attitude against keeping the memory of al-Husayn alive in the popular consciousness of

the Shi'ite, were transformed into symbols of repression and persecution which were heirs of the Umayyads and became an extension of the Umayyad entity in authority, which used to execute its plans and policies against al-Husayn and the policy of al-Husayn. This feeling in the Shi'ite impelled him even more to keep close to the symbol .of al-Husayn, in doctrine, in religious law, in society and in politics

As we shall see, these basic factors were the essential great influence on the existence of the revolution of al-Husayn. We will become acquainted with the extent of the participation of each one of them, when we study, in the following chapters, the revolution of al-Husayn in popular consciousness in the following manifestations: (i) the pilgrimage (ziyara), (ii) the poetry of lament for al-Husayn, (iii) the gatherings of .remembrance, and (iv) the phenomenon of weeping

## The Ziyara

### I. The Legality Of The Ziyara

Al-Shaykh Taqi al-Din Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim, better known as Ibn Taymiyya (۶۶۱-۷۲۸) held the view that pilgrimage (ziyara) to the tomb of the Prophet was forbidden, let alone pilgrimage to other tombs. He considered that travelling to make a pilgrimage to tombs where the performance of prayer was necessary, was forbidden. For this view of his, he relied upon Traditions, which do not substantiate his requirement, arguments based on the application of discretion in Islamic law, which have no value in legal deduction, and dangers which, he claimed, were consequences of pilgrimages .to tombs which do no exist

On the other hand, the jurists and Traditionists from

all the Islamic schools of law reject his views and confirm the legality of making a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet and others with much evidence taken from the .Qur 'an and Sunna, the consensus of the Muslims and the evidence of reason

Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, in his book, Kashf al-Irtiyab fi Atba' Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab has reported from al-Samhudi al-Shafi'i in his book called Wafa ' al- Wafa ' bi Akbar Dar al-Mustafa, the attitude of the leaders of the four schools of law to this (problem. He says:(۱

As for what is reported from the leaders of the four schools of law, in Wafa ' al- Wafa'" after mentioning the differences among the early Muslims about whether it was best to begin at Mecca or Medina, he records that Abu Hanifa said that it was best to begin at Mecca, although it was permissible to begin at Medina. Then one would come close to the tomb of the Apostle of God and stand between the tomb and the qibla (or ....(direction of prayer

As for the report that Malik disliked men saying, 'We made a pilgrimage,' to the tomb of the Prophet, assuming that this is true, it should be interpreted as a dislike of using this expression for reasons which he mentioned but we should take too long to report, not because of a dislike of the principle of such a pilgrimage (ziyara). There are, however, scholars, like al-Subki and Ibn Rushd, who, according to Wafa' al



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The following passage is taken from al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin's Kashf al-Irtiyab fi -۱ Atba' Muhammad b. 'Abd al- Wahab (p. ۴۷۱ ) citing al-Samhudi, Wafa ' al-Wafa ' bi .Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa, II ۴۱۱-۴۱۵

.Wafa', dispute with him over the dislike of this expression

Al-Samhudi had mentioned in Wafa' al-Wafa' statements by Shafi'ites concerning the recommended nature of making a pilgrimage to the Prophet's tomb. Then he added that the Hanafites maintained the pilgrimage to the Prophet's tomb was the best of the recommended practices, even close to being treated at the level of an obligatory practice. He went on to say that, in the same way, the Malikites and Hanbalites (stipulated it and al-Subki has explained their report in his book on pilgrimage (ziyara ".…

The permissibility of making a pilgrimage to the graves of righteous men, and even of those who are merely Muslims, of calling for peace to be with them, of praying for them and of bringing reward to them by recitation of the holy Qur 'an and by good actions-this permissibility is confirmed by the Sunna which is supported by the .definitive practice associated with the time of the Prophet

It is well known that the Imamite Shi'a hold the view that it is a recommended practice to make pilgrimages to the tomb of the Prophet, of the Imams of the Holy Family and of righteous men, to worship God at them by performing the salat, praying, reciting the holy Qur 'an, calling for peace to be with them and praying for them. Furthermore, they consider that that is one of the rituals of God and it is an act of piety of the heart. According to them, it was established

by the definitive Sunna and the definitive consensus. There is no dispute about that .among them

It is certain that the practice of the Muslims from the time of the Apostle of God throws light on the legal aspect of the problem and reveals, at least, the permissibility .of making pilgrimages to tombs, even if it does not reveal its legal predominance

### II. The History Of The Ziyara Before Al-Husayn

:Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin has reported

It has been established that the Prophet used to visit the cemetery of al-Baqi' and" the martyrs of Uhud. Ibn Maja has related with his chain of authorities that the Prophet said: 'Visit graves, for they will remind you of the Hereafter.'(۱) He also reported with his chain of authorities that A'isha said that the Prophet allowed the visit to graves... He also reported with his chain of authorities that the Prophet said: 'I used to forbid you to visit graves but now visit them, for they will make you abstain from the world and remind you of the Hereafter.' Muslim has reported the first part of the above tradition up to the words 'but now visit them.'(۲) Al-Nasa'i has reported it in a slightly variant form: 'I forbade you from visiting graves but now let whoever wants to '.visit them, do so

The Prophet visited the grave of his mother. Muslim has reported in his Sahih as has Ibn Maja and al-Nasa'i, with their chain of authorities, that Abu Hurayra said: 'The Prophet visited the grave of his mother. He wept and it made those



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۱- ۲۳۵ ,Ibn Maja. Sunan. vol. L.

۲- ۲۲۵ ,Muslim, Sahih on the margin of Irshad al-Sari, IV.

(around him weep.'(۱

Muslim has reported that whenever the Prophet used to spend the night with 'A'isha he used to go out, last thing at night, to the cemetery of al-Baqi' and say: 'Peace be '.with you, abode of people who believe. What you were promised has come to you

He taught 'A'isha when she asked him: 'How should I address them, Apostle of God?' He said, 'Say: Peace be with the people of the place who are believers and Muslims.' .This tradition is reported by Muslim

Ibn Abi Shayba has reported from Abu Ja'far (i.e., Imam Muhammad al-Baqir) in Wafa ' al-Wafa' that Fatima, daughter of the Apostle of God, used to visit the grave of (Hamza. She repaired it and improved it, and she marked it with a stone.(۲

It is reported on the authority of the former (i.e. Muhammad al-Baqir) that Fatima .used to visit the graves of the martyrs every two or three days until she died

Al-Hakim has reported on the authority of'Ali' that Fatima used to visit the grave of .her uncle, Hamza, every week. There she would perform the salat, pray and weep

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When 'Umar made peace with Jerusalem, during the conquest of Syria, and Ka'b al-Ahbar came to him and submitted to Islam, 'Umar was delighted with his acceptance of Islam and said to him: 'Would you come with me to Medina, visit the Prophet's tomb and enjoy seeing it?' 'Yes,' he replied. When he returned to Medina from the conquest of Syria, the first thing



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.Ibid.; Ibn Maja, op. cit., ۲۴۵; al-Nasa 'i, vol. L, ۲۸۶ -۱

.Al-Samhudi, op. cit., II, ۱۱۲ -۲

.he did was to go to the mosque and pray for peace to be with the Apostle of God

In Wafa ' al- Wafa ' of al-Samhudi 'Abd al-Razzaq reponed with his sound chain of authorities that when Ibn 'Umar came back from a journey, he would go to the Prophet's tomb and say: 'Peace be with you, O Apostle of God, peace be with you, O '.Abu Bakr, and peace be with you, O my father

In the Muwatta' in the recension of Yahya ibn Yahya, it is reported that Ibn 'Umar used to stand at the tomb of the Prophet and he would pray for blessings and peace .to be with the Prophet and he would pray for peace to be with Abu Bakr and 'Umar

It is also reported from Ibn 'Awn that a man asked Nafi' whether ibn 'Umar used to pray for peace at the tomb. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I have seen him a hundred times, or more than a hundred times. He would come to the tomb and stand before it. Then he would say: Peace be with the Prophet, peace be with Abu Bakr and peace be with my '.father

In the Musnad of Abu Hanifa it is reported that Ibn 'Umar said: 'It is from the Sunna that you should come to the tomb of the Prophet from the direction of the prayer, or qibla. You should put the direction of prayer, or qibla, at your back and you should face the tomb. Then you

'.should say: Peace be with you, O Prophet, and the mercy and blessings of God

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There is a detailed report from ' Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz that whenever he used to send a messenger (to Medina) from Syria, he used to say: 'Pray for peace to be with the Apostle of God on my behalf.' That was in the early period of the generation of the followers of the Companions. Among those who have mentioned that about him is Abu Bakr ibn 'Asim al-Nabil. He said, in his Manasik, that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz used to send a messenger straight from Syria to Medina to recite the prayer for peace to be .with the Prophet. Then he would return

As for what is reported of the action of the rest of the Muslims, in Wafa' al-Wafa',(١) it is reported that historians and Traditionists have mentioned that Ziyad ibn Abihi (i.e. son of his father) wanted to make the pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca. His brother Abu .Bakra came to him but he would not speak to Ziyad directly

So Ziyad took his son and sat him in Abu Bakra's lap so that he might speak to the son directly and hear Ziyad. Abu Bakra said: 'Your father has done this and he has done that. Now he wants to go on the pilgrimage (hajj) while Umm Habiba, the wife of the Prophet is in Medina. If she permits him to see her, what a great disaster and treachery to the



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.Ibid, II, ۴۱۰ -۱

Apostle of God by her it would be! If she remains in seclusion from him what a great proof against him it would be!' 'You will not let your brother have your advice,' said Ziyad.

According to what al-Baladhuri reported, Ziyad then abandoned the idea of going on the pilgrimage. Others reported that he made the pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca but he did not make a pilgrimage (ziyara) (to the Prophet's tomb at Medina) because of the words of Abu Bakra. Al-Subki has commented: 'Taking in every consideration, the story gives evidence for the fact that the pilgrimage (ziyara) (to the Prophet's tomb at Medina) during the pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca was well-known at that time.

Otherwise, it would have been possible for him to make the pilgrimage (hajj) without going by way of Medina. Indeed it would have been nearer for him because he was in Iraq. Yet going to Medina was in their eyes a matter which could not be abandoned.'"(۱)

The passage which we have quoted clearly reveals the legality of the pilgrimage (ziyara). Depending on this legality Muslims, both male and female, in every age, have carried out this practice as being one of the rituals of God. None of their jurists, Traditionists or preachers have denounced them for that. Rather they have urged them to do it.

The denunciation of this practice is only known to have come from Ibn Taymiyya and Shaykh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab in more recent times. The Muslim scholars have met



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۱- Al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, Kashf al-Irtiyab ...; op. cit. devotes chapter XVII, pp. ۴۵۹-۴۸۳ to the ziyara to tombs. In this chapter there is a comprehensive study of the problem of ziyara in all its aspects. We have relied upon it for all that we have presented above. The significance of the statement by Abu Bakr is that Ziyad claimed to be the son of Abu Sufyan but this had no basis for legitimacy because he was born as the result of an unlawful relationship between Abu Sufyan and Sumayya, his

mother, whereas Umm Habiba, a mother of the faithful, was a legitimate daughter of Abu Sufyan. If Ziyad made the ziyara to the tomb of the Apostle in Medina, he ought to visit Umm Habiba as he claimed that she was his sister. She was not, however, his sister because, as we have just mentioned, he was not a legitimate son of Abu Sufyan. If she had met him because of his claim that she was his sister, that would have been a betrayal of the Apostle of God. If she had refused to meet him, that would have .been a humiliation for him and a denial of his claim to be the son of Abu Sufyan

this juristic attitude to the problem with amazement and disapproval the direction the invalidity of the view forbidding it, with evidence from the Qur'an, the Sunna, the .consensus and the evidence of reason

Therefore, when the Imams of the Holy Family directed their Shi'a to make pilgrimages to al-Husayn, they were only applying a common legal practice to a .particular destination, namely al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib

The Imams of the Holy Family have made public their great concern to direct Muslims, in general, and the Shi'a, in particular, to make pilgrimages to the Prophet, to the Imams of the Holy Family and to the men and women who have stood the test in the history of Islam, by fighting against his enemies, and by sticking fast to his laws, as a means of attaining educational and religious objectives. We will treat these in detail in .the ensuing section of our study

### III. The Ziyara To Al-Husayn: Its Objectives And Aims

Perhaps, it may be that one of the things which distinguishes the Imamite Shi'a from many other Muslims is their extraordinary concern to make pilgrimages to saintly men and women in the history of Islam, and their intense eagerness to practise this .continually

The foremost of these saintly men is the Apostle of God and, after him, the Imams of the Holy Family. The foremost of the latter is Imam al-Husayn ibn 'Ali. Added to these are some women who enjoy a special status in the history of Islam, in general, or the history of Shi'ism, in particular. At the

head of these women comes the Lady Fatima the Fair. Then there is the Lady Zaynab, daughter of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. After her, there are the women who have participated, in one way or another, in the history of Islam in general, or the history of .Shi'ism in particular

There is a widespread belief in the minds of the people, even in the minds of a great majority of the Shi'a themselves, in recent times, that the motives for making these pilgrimages (ziyara) are connected with the veneration of the persons to whom the pilgrimages are made, because they are noble in the eyes of God, and therefore the pilgrimages are connected with seeking intercession by them with God, and with .seeking blessing from God through their mediation

In short, the widespread belief is that these motives bring the persons to whom pilgrimages are made and the person who makes a pilgrimage to them into contact; .and that this is everything

.This, however, is a great mistake

The mistake of non-Shi'ites in the understanding of this Shi'ite practice is a result of judging it from the outside without understanding it from the inside, and without understanding its processes in the political and social ideas of the Imams of the Holy Family. The latter have made the pilgrimage (ziyara) an established practice in Islamic legal tradition and something the Muslim practises continually as a political, social and cultural institution which has been established at the heart of the Shi'ite cultural .cosmology

The mistake of

the Shi'a, themselves in their practice of such pilgrimages arises out of their failure to understand it as an institution which represents, in the history of Islam, the revolutionary core which has set itself up as a permanent witness and critic of the existing government and its methods of dealing with the umma.

When the inner structure of the Shi'ite man begins to crack and abandon its basic virtue, his understanding of the practices, which were formed to nourish his soul and mind, changes. Then he changes them into practices which paralyse him and justify his defeatist position. This is what has happened to the Muslim individual in general, but here we are studying the special position of Shi'ite man.

The Imams of the Holy Family directed their Shi'a to make visitations to the Prophet and the Imams who preceded them in the service of a great aim. This was to keep the relationship between living Islam and the Shi'ite man throbbing with life lest Islam become transformed in his mind into mere ritualistic practices and dead jurisprudence.

Lest the formal practical patterns of Islam, with which the Muslim lives in his daily life at the level of government and society, should become merely repetitive patterns which have been accepted from the past. Whereas they should be kept alive in his mind as the sound, healthy and pure patterns of Islam, and they should be kept alive in his mind as the faithfu١ trusted practices of Islam.

When the Imams of the Holy

Family made the ziyara into an intellectual, political and social institution, they intended to put Shi'ite man in living and direct contact with the sources of his Islam in .thought and ideology, in application and practice

The texts concerning the ziyara to the Apostle of God bring light to bear on the efforts of the Apostle of God in the call to Islam, in its spreading and in its consolidation, in addition to the expressions of praise, honour and respect for the person of the .Apostle which they contain

The texts concerning the ziyara to the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, .include an exposition of his intellectual and practical efforts in the cause of Islam

The same is the case with regard to the texts concerning pilgrimages to the other Imams of the Holy Family. Each of the approved pilgrimages includes a commitment before God which the Shi'ite man makes, particularly, with the person to whom the pilgrimage is made and, generally, with the Apostle and the Imams of the Holy Family, that he will remain faithful to their covenant, their faith and their practice. Here, we :will give some examples of that

O God, make me, in this state that I am in, one of those who will receive Your blessing, mercy and forgiveness. O God, make my life the life of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, and my death the death of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, may the blessings of God be with him and his

family.(1)

O God, I testify before You to the authority (wilaya) of those to whom You and Your Apostle have dedicated it. I testify to my renunciation of those whom You and Your Apostle have renounced.(2)

I testify before God, the Blessed and Exalted-and He is indeed a sufficient witness. I... testify before You that I believe in You and will follow You in my very nature, in the legal requirements of my religion, in the impressions made by my actions and in my final destiny and resting place.(3)

O God, I testify before You and before those of Your angels who are present that I believe in them and reject those who fight against them. O God, make what I say with my tongue be a reality in my heart and a religious precept in my actions.(4)

There is much more of this material.

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Among (the prayers of) these pilgrimages which are recited at the shrines or places of pilgrimages of the Holy Family, those of al-Husayn ibn 'Ali are the most numerous and the richest in intellectual and kinetic content.

The concern of the Imams of the Holy Family has been constantly and consistently intent on bringing light to bear on the revolution of al-Husayn. It has made the memory of al-Husayn a firm and fiercely living presence in the public mind. It has put pilgrimages to al-Husayn at the head of religious festivals for the Shi'a in every part of the world.

The reason for that is that the revolution of Imam



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۱- Ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummi, Kamil al-ziyara (Najaf, ۱۳۵۶ A.H.) ۱۷۷-۱۷۸.

۲- Ibid., ۱۹۷.

.Ibid, ۲۳۳ -۳

.Ibid, ۲۴۰ -۴

al-Husayn was the greatest event in tragedy and nobility in the history of the Shi'a. Even though Imam 'Ali waged many wars to correct the course of Islam, he waged them from a position of authority. On the other hand, Imam al-Husayn had embarked on his war of self sacrifice from outside authority, even against authority, and without .worldly expectations

It is because of this that his revolution enjoys a greater power of revival and a greater ability to influence and to outline the sacrificial example for Shi'ite man to face the difficulties of his existence under oppressive governments. From another angle, it is an exemplary, intensely stimulating and practical application of the changing of an .intellectual attitude into a course of action and activity in daily life

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It is, then, an absolute certainty that, in order for the pilgrimage to accomplish its influence, it must arise out of an awareness of the role played in Islam by the person to whom it is made, and of his attitude towards the struggle for the sake of Islam. This state of awareness is the preoccupation of many of the texts which have reported (that the character of a pilgrim to al-Husayn is of 'one who knows his right."(۱)

The knowledge of the right of the person, to whom the pilgrimage is made, means an awareness of the role which he carried out in his life, of his central position in the leadership of the movement of Islam in the two fields



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.Ibid., ۱۳۸-۱۴۱,۱۴۶ -۱

of legislation and application. Whenever a pilgrimage is carried out in the light of this awareness, it will strengthen the contact with dynamic and effective Islam in the heart and mind of the pilgrim because it will bring him into contact with dynamic and .effective examples in the history of Islam

Making a pilgrimage to the Apostle and the Imams of the Holy Family is not an idle pastime, nor is it a worldly activity. It is a spiritual act of worship. It is an action which is aimed at bringing oneself closer to God. Because it is an act of worship, the texts, which call for the practice of it and devotion to it, contain promises of reward from .God, of forgiveness of sins and errors and of the granting of blessings

This is a matter which can be understood when such a pilgrimage is put in the correct framework which we have elucidated, and when it does not become a mere act of celebration and veneration which a living man carries out to honour a dead man. When a Shi'ite carries out a pilgrimage, he is renewing his contact with Islam as a whole and he is promising God that he will hold fast to it, guard it and apply it in his life. It is an action which entitles him to reward and blessings from God in accordance with .the principles of Islam

From what we have mentioned the magnitude and great effect of this institution on the formation of

Shi'ite man will be clear as well as the vast potentialities which abound in it and the extent of its ability to transform psychologically Shi'ite man from his position of surrender to a dynamic and active position when he regains the true concept of the pilgrimage and puts it into practice in the essential spirituality from which it sprung .forth

It also makes clear the extent of the burden of error into which Shi'ite man has fallen, as well as some of his spiritual leaders, when he conceives of the pilgrimage as being only a form of honour and veneration of a certain person and neglects the numerous .aspects of the educational objectives which it aims at

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The field of study of the pilgrimage is very broad as must now be clear. It includes the pilgrimages to the Prophet, all the Imams of the Holy Family and other outstanding men and women in the history of Islam, generally, and in the history of Shi'ism, in .particular

We are, however, compelled to limit our present work to the specific field of our study, namely the pilgrimages made to Imam al-Husayn as a manifestation of the revolution .of al-Husayn in popular consciousness

This field, in terms of the material which can be studied, is, as we mentioned above, the fullest of the aspects of pilgrimage and the richest of them in ideas and emotions. This arises out of the special position which al-Husayn and his revolution enjoy in the Shi'ite mind in terms of

his important position in the continuous movement of correction which began with 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and has, in no way, finished.

### IV. The Ziyara In The Legal Texts

Hundreds of sound Traditions have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family, in many of which there is the call to make pilgrimages to al-Husayn and that this should be done at all times, as well as on specific days, and from near and from far.

Similarly texts have been reported from them, which give the pattern of the pilgrimages which are made to al-Husayn at specific times and on every other occasion.

In the same way the Imams of the Holy Family had performed pilgrimages to al-Husayn, themselves. By that they were a model for their Shi'a in this matter. The earliest example which we have of that is the action of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin 'Ali ibn al-Husayn. He used to go from Medina to Karbala' to make pilgrimages to the tomb of his father.

One of the Shi'a of the Holy Family saw him at the mosque of Kufa. Since he was surprised at his presence, he asked him: 'What has brought you to a land in which your father was killed?' He answered him: 'I have made a pilgrimage to my father and I have performed the salat in his mosque.'(۱) It appears from the question of the questioner that he was surprised at Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn's presence. This suggests that the pilgrimage had not yet become widespread and a familiar matter.

In what follows, we



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۱- Al-Kulayni, Rawdat al-Kafi, (Tehran, ۱۳۸۹ A.H.), ۲۵۵.

shall mention some selected texts which contain the basis for the legality of the .pilgrimage as a principle. They, also, include the urging and wish for it to be done

In a Tradition whose chain of authorities goes back to Imam Muhammad al-Baqir .١ ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, the latter said: 'Order our Shi'a to make pilgrimages to the tomb of al-Husayn b. 'Ali. Doing this is a duty for every Muslim who acknowledges the (Imamate of al-Husayn.'(١

In a Tradition whose chain of authorities goes back to Zurara, who reported: I said .٢ to Abu Jafar (i.e. Imam Muhammad al-Baqir), 'What do you say about anyone who makes pilgrimages to your father when he is afraid?' He answered, 'God will keep him safe on the day of the greatest fear. The angels will meet him with good news and he (will be told: Do not fear and do not be sad. This is the day of your success.'(٢

It is reported on the authority of Musa ibn Umar, on the authority of Hassan al- .٣ Basri, on the authority of Mu'awiya ibn Wahb, who recounted: I asked permission to visit Abu 'Abd Allah (i.e. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq). I was told to enter. So I went in and found him in his place of prayer in his house. I sat until he had finished his salat. Then I :heard him address his Lord in private prayer saying

O God, forgive me and my brothers, and those who make pilgrimages to the tomb of" al-Husayn, who



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.Ibn Qawlawayh, op cit., ١٢١ -١

.Ibid, ١٢٥ -٢

have spent their wealth and made their bodies go there out of a desire for reverence towards us, out of hope for what there will be with You for them through contact with us, out of a joy which they have entered into through Your Prophet, in answer to our .command and because of anger which they have entered into against our enemies

By that, they wish for Your approval. Reward them on our behalf with happiness. Watch over them night and day and remain, in the best way possible, with their families whom they have left behind Accompany them and protect them from the evil of every tyrant, from every weak and violent one of Your creatures and from the evil of devils, both jinn and human. Give them the most excellent reward which they hope for from You through their absence from their homes and through their preference of .us to their sons, their families and their relations

O God, our enemies denounce them for their journey. Yet that does not stop them from journeying to us, out of opposition by them to those who oppose us. Have mercy on those faces which have been burnt by the sun. Have mercy on those cheeks which .(have twisted in grief at the hollow grave of Abu 'Abd Allah (i.e. Imam al-Husayn

Have mercy on those eyes which have shed tears, out of mercy for us. Have mercy on those hearts which have mourned and been enflamed for us. Have

mercy on that cry which was for us. O God, I entrust to you those bodies and those souls until you receive them at the watering-places of Heaven on the day of the greatest thirst."

Mu'awiya ibn Wahb continued: He continued to pray while prostrating as he made this prayer. When he finished I said, 'May I be your ransom, if what I heard you saying was said to someone who did not know God, I would think that Hell-fire would never feed on anything of him. By God, I wish that I had made a pilgrimage (ziyara) to him and not performed the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj).' He replied, 'I do not rejoice with you for that. What prevents you from making a pilgrimage to him?' Then he went on, 'Mu'awiya, why did you not do that?' 'May I be your ransom,' I replied, 'I did not see that the matter had reached all this extent.' He said, 'Mu'awiya, those in Heaven who pray for those who make pilgrimages to him are more than those who pray for them on earth.'(۱)

۴. In the Tradition from Ibn Bukayr, that latter said: I said to Abu 'Abd Allah (i.e. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq), 'I stopped at al-Arjan. My heart struggled with me about staying at the grave of your father. When I left, my heart was apprehensive and worried so that I went back out of fear of the authorities, informers and soldiers from the garrisons.'

He said: 'Ibn Bukayr, don't you want



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۱- Ibid., ۱۱۵-۱۱۸.

God to see you fearful concerning us? Don't you known that God shades anyone who is afraid, out of fear for us, under the protection of His throne. His reporter under the throne is al-Husayn and God keeps him safe from the terrors of the Day of Resurrection. The people will be terrified but he will not be terrified. The angels will bring succour to his power and they will quieten his heart with good news."(۱)

۵. In a Tradition of Abu'Abd Allah (Imam Jafar al-Sadiq), he said: "Ali (ibn Maymun al-Sayigh), make a pilgrimage to al-Husayn and do not abandon him.' 'Ali ibn Maymun asked: 'What reward will there be for anyone who goes to him?' He replied: 'For him who goes to him on foot, God has ordained a good reward for each step and the removal of an evil for each step, and He has raised his rank.'(۲)

۶. In a Tradition which is reported from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, he said: 'Whoever would rejoice to be at the tables of light on the Day of Resurrection, let him be among those who make pilgrimages to al-Husayn ibn'Ali.'(۳)

۷. In a Tradition from Imam Musa al-Kazim ibn Jafar, who said: 'The least reward for one who makes a visitation to al-Husayn on the banks of the Euphrates, if he recognises his right, his sanctity and his authority as Imam, will be that his past and later sins will be forgiven.'(۴)

۸. In a Tradition whose chain of authorities goes back to Imam



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۱- Ibid., ۱۲s-۶.

۲- Ibid, ۱۳۳۴.

۳- Ibid , ۱ ۳۵.

۴- Ibid, ۱۳۸.

Ali al-Rida ibn Musa, he said: 'Every Imam has a mutual compact with his close' associates and his Shi'a. This compact can be properly fulfilled and carried out by making visitations to their tombs. Whoever of them makes a visitation to them out of the desire to make such a visitation and in confirmation of their desire, for them their Imams will be intercessors on the Day of Resurrection.'(١)

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There are examples of the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of texts which have come from the Imams of the Holy Family urging pilgrimages to al-Husayn in different ways.

Some of these texts came in answer to questions from different men; others were made from the beginning without any question in order to direct the thought of the Shi'a towards pilgrimages.

Because of these texts which are specific to the pilgrimage to al-Husayn or those in which the Imams urge pilgrimages to the Prophet and other Imams or other righteous men and woman a Shi'ite social and cultural climate has developed in respect to the pilgrimage, in a general way, and in respect to the pilgrimage to al-Husayn, in particular.

This has formed an emotional human tendency which constantly grows in importance in all lives and places which it travels through at all times and in all circumstances.

Among the evidence for the growing importance of the pilgrimage among the Shi'a is the story that one of the adherents of the Shi'a complained to the seventh Imam, Musa al-Kazim ibn Ja'far, that the pilgrimage to



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١- Ibid., ١٢٢.

al-Husayn had become so well-known that the pious pilgrim was no longer able to practise it without drawing attention to himself.

This was something which was a negation of the piety which made a Muslim prefer to do good works secretly. He reported: I went to the Imam and said: 'May I be your ransom, people who know of this matter(1) and others who do not, are making pilgrimages to al-Husayn. Even women are making the journey to him. It has become very famous so that I have held myself back going because of the fame which I have seen it to have.' The Imam stopped without answering for some time. Then he came towards me and said: 'O Iraqi, since they make themselves known, you will not make yourself known! By God, anyone who goes to al-Husayn recognising his rights, cannot but have his past and later sins forgiven by God.'(2)

Fear of the official authorities did not succeed in limiting the development and spread of this tendency. There are texts which indicate that the measure of the authorities only had a slight effect. It appears that this tendency-as the nature of things requires-began little by little. Then it constantly grew in importance and its scope widened.

It came to have fixed seasons which were formed at a very early period, at least in the time of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. In a Tradition recorded by 'Abd Allah ibn Hammad al-Basri, the Imam said to him: 'I have learnt that people



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1- 'This matter' (amr) is a term which occurs frequently in reports and Traditions from the Imams of the Holy Family; it also occurs in the questions of their followers. It means 'Shi'ism'. A person who knows 'this matter' is a Shi'ite, and someone who does not know 'this matter' is a non-Shi'ite. Perhaps this expression to indicate Shi'ism was used in conversations because of the atmosphere of caution which prevailed among the Shi'a as a result of the state's hostile attitude to them.

2- Ibn Qawlawayh, op. cit., ۱۴۰.

are going to the tomb of al-Husayn from regions around Kufa as well as other people and women who mourn for him. That is in the middle of the month of Sha'ban. Among them are reciters who recite, story-tellers who tell his story, mourners who mourn and poets who recite laments.' 'Yes,' I answered. 'May I be your ransom, I have seen some of what you describe.' He said: 'Praise be to God Who has caused there to be among people, those who come to us, praise us and lament for us. God has made our enemies those who criticise them for being close to us, and others who threaten them and revile what they do.'(١)

It appears that the Imam meant the 'Abbasids and their followers by his last words.

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All the means of transportation known at that time were used in travelling to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of al-Husayn in addition to walking.(٢) The same is the case right up to the present time-the majority of the text lays stress on the importance of walking to make a pilgrimage to al-Husayn. In some texts, however, there is mention of boats.

The texts in Kamil al-Ziyara come from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, with the exception of one text which comes from Imam al-Baqir. It is certain that this tendency had begun to grow and spread its scope during the Umayyad period.

Similarly groups of pilgrims used to come in crowds from the majority of the regions of the Islamic



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١- Ibid, ٣٢٥-۶.

٢- Ibid, ١٣٣-۵.

world at that time, perhaps even all of them. Instructions are mentioned in the texts .to pilgrims who came from Khurasan, Arjan and Yemen

As for those who were unable to get to the tomb of al-Husayn, they were able to perform the ritual of ziyara at a distance. The Imams have given texts for the ziyara to al-Husayn from a distance. The report of Malik al-Juhm contains an explanation of the appropriate actions for a believer to do when he is far from Karbala' and cannot travel there to perform the pilgrimage to al-Husayn. Malik said: I asked the Imam: 'May I be your ransom, what should someone do who lives far away from the place '?' and cannot get to it on the Day of 'Ashura

Imam al-Baqir replied: 'On that day he should go out into the desert or up on a high roof of his house. There he should give an indication of his wishing peace to be with al-Husayn and he should strive in prayer against his killer. After that he should perform two rak'as, doing that on the middle of the day before the sun begins to decline. Then he should mourn for al-Husayn and weep for him. He should, also, tell those in his house to weep for him.'(۱)

In this way the opportunity was provided, for everyone and in all circumstances, to participate in and be influenced by the ziyara and through that to renew contact with al-Husayn and what he represents. This facet



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۱- Ibid, ۱۵۴,۱۶۳.

of the legality of performing the ziyara, even while at a distance from the tomb, which has mentioned, reveals the intense anxiety of the Imams of the Holy Family to fix firmly the roots of the institution of ziyara in every heart in order to provide the widest .scope of its educational and guiding task

While the performance of the pilgrimage is something which is recommended on every day of the year, there are special days and nights in which the merit for performing it is greater. They are: the Day of 'Arafat (Yawm 'Arafat), that is ۹th Dhu al-Hijja; the Day of Sacrifice (Yawm al-Adha), that is the ۱۰th Dhu al-Hijja; the Day of the End of the Fast (Yawm al-Fitr), that is ۱st Shawwal; the Day of'Ashura', that is ۱۰th Muharram; ۱st of Rajab; ۱۵th of Rajab; ۱۵th of Shatban; and the Nights of Destiny .(layali al-qadr), that is ۱۹th, ۲۱st and ۲۳rd of the month of Ramadan

Sometimes added to these times is the pilgrimage made to him on ۲۰th of Safar, which is the ziyara of the forty days (on the occasion of the passing of forty days after the martyrdom of al-Husayn; that is from ۱۰th Muharram to ۲۰th Safar). On that day a great number of pilgrims gather at the tomb of al-Husayn at Karbala', even though it does not enjoy, with the religious scholars, the status which is accorded to the rest of the times for pilgrimage which we have mentioned earlier, because the

narration for the pilgrimage after forty days has a weak chain of authorities and is supported by weak evidence.

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By this direction of theirs -in addition to the personal factor of al-Husayn and his revolution with every Muslim- the Imams of the Holy Family have been able to make the personality, revolution and tragedy of al-Husayn and what happened to him, his family and his followers at Karbala', into a living vibrant thing which is continually recalled.

By means of the performance of the pilgrimage, they have made it something which preserves contact with his reasons and objectives, something which brings praise and veneration to al-Husayn and his family, something which contains the pledges which the pilgrim makes before God that he will keep to this path and follow this way, also something which includes the denunciation of the oppressive deviating forces which committed their hideous crime at Karbala', and the denunciation of all other forces, later on, which followed those criminal forces in their example, their slogans and their attitude.

...May God curse a people who killed you. May God curse those who gave them the possibility of fighting against you. May I be innocent before God and you of them, their party and their followers.(1)

May God curse those who fight against you. May God curse those who ordered it. May God curse those who got that order and accepted it.(2)

The ruling powers, in the time of the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids and those who followed, became aware of



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1- Ibid., ۱۷۶.

2- Ibid, ۲۰۲.

the danger of this current and of its ability to produce a state of consciousness of the situation among the people and a repudiation of the dominant political forces. Therefore throughout Islamic history, various attempts were made by the authorities and their supporters, aimed at stopping the increasing number of pilgrims to Karbala'.

The attempts appeared in two different manifestations.

The First Manifestation was to put garrisons and guards on the roads leading to Karbala' to stop the pilgrims from reaching the grave of al-Husayn and to carry out various punishments on those who were apprehended. The punishment, on some occasions, was death.

It appears that this repressive manifestation was so cruel that its effects were reflected in the demeanour of the Shi'a in performing the pilgrimage. It was also the reason for the great number of questions about the rules for the pilgrimage in circumstances of fear.

It reached such a degree that Ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummi devoted a special chapter in his book with the title: Chapter Forty-five: The Reward for the Pilgrimage to al-Husayn made in Fear. In it he has recorded some of the things which have been set out by the Imams of the Holy Family in this matter.

Some of what he presents is reported from Imam Abu Jafar al-Baqir and the other part of it is from Imam Abu' Abd Allah al-Sadiq. This means that the repression of this Shi'ite practice existed in the Umayyad period and continued into the 'Abbasid period. In what follows, there will be

.some of the texts which Ibn Qawlawayh has presented

It is reported from Muslim ibn Muhammad: Abu Ja' far Muhammad ibn'Ali (i.e., Imam al-Baqir) asked me: 'Are you going to the tomb of al-Husayn?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'but in fear and dread.' He said: 'The more intense this is, then the reward for it will be in (accordance with the fear.'(١)

It is reported from al-Asamm that Ibn Bukayr said: I said to Abu 'Abd Allah (i.e. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq), 'I stopped at Arjan. My heart struggled with me about staying at the grave of your father. When I left, my heart was apprehensive and worried so that I (went back out of fear of the authorities, informers and soldiers of the garrisons ....'(٢)

Another example is reported by al-Husayn ibn Abi Hamza al-Thumali. He recounted: 'Towards the end of the period of the Marwanids, I went to perform a pilgrimage to the grave of al-Husayn, keeping myself out of view of the Syrians until I reached (Karbala'. Then I hid myself in the area of the tomb until the middle of the night ....'(٣)

Another example are the words of'Abd Allah ibn Hammadal-Basri to Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq: 'May I be your ransom, I used to go to the grave of al-Husayn until I became beset by the authorities who were determined to guard their wealth. I was well-known to them. So out of precautionary dissimulation (taqiyya), I gave up going to (it.'(۴)

Another example is the answer Misma' Kardin gave to Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq



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١- ١٢٧ ,Ibid.

٢- ١٢۶ ,Ibid.

٣- ٢-١١١ ,Ibid.

۴- ١٢۵ ,Ibid.

when he asked him whether he was going to the tomb of al-Husayn. He said: 'No, I am a man well-known to the people of Basra, among whom are people who follow the wishes of the Caliph.

We have many enemies among the tribesmen including those who hate the Shi'a and others. I could not be sure that they are not watching my situation on behalf of the sons of Sulayman.' (The Sulayman who is mentioned here is Sulayman ibn 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbas, the governor of Basra.)

This method of combatting the pilgrimages to al-Husayn did not succeed in checking the overriding tendency which continued to grow in size and importance. The texts, which Ibn Qawlawayh and others have reported, and the fact of history confirm that this tendency remained firm and constantly increasing without the repression having any effect on it.

The Second Manifestation was the attempt to remove the object of pilgrimage. This was done by the destruction of the tomb of al-Husayn and the wiping out of any trace of it so that its place would become lost and would not be found. This manifestation occurred in the reign of the'Abbasid, al-Mutawakkil, through the decision he made to destroy the tomb of al-Husayn. We will let Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani tell us his methods in what he has reported of that time:

"Al-Mutawakkil was very hostile towards the descendants of Abu Talib, cruel towards their group and suspicious of their activities. He had great anger and animosity towards them and

was very doubtful and suspicious of them. It occurred to him that Ubayd Allah ibn Yahya ibn Khaqan, his vizir, also used to think badly of them and the denunciation of .their activity seemed good to him

He carried out actions against them that none of the 'Abbasids before him had carried out. Among these, he ploughed up the grave of al-Husayn and removed all trace of it. He put armed garrisons on the rest of the roads. Anyone they found making a .pilgrimage to it, they brought to him. He killed or punished them severely

Ahmad ibn al-Ja'd al-Washa reported to me-and he was a witness of it: The reason for ploughing up the grave of al-Husayn was that one of the songstresses used to send their young girls to him, before he was Caliph, to sing to him when he was .drinking. When he assumed authority, he sent for that songstress

He learnt that she was absent and had gone to perform a pilgrimage to the tomb of al-Husayn. News of this reached her and she hurried back. She sent one of her young girls to him whom he was familiar with. He asked her, 'Where were you?' She answered, 'My mistress went to make the pilgrimage and she took us with her.' It was in the month of Sha’ban. So he asked, 'Where were you making a pilgrimage to in the .month of Sha'ban?' 'To the tomb of al-Husayn,' she answered

He flew into a rage and ordered

her mistress to be imprisoned, and he confiscated her property. He sent one of his men, called al-Dizaraj-who was a Jew-to the tomb of al-Husayn. He ordered him to plough it up, obliterate it and destroy everything around it. He carried that out. He destroyed everything around it, demolished the building and ploughed up about two hundred fields around it. When he reached his grave, no one would approach it.

So he brought some Jews and they ploughed it up. Then he made water flow all around it. He put armed garrisons in control of it. There was a mile between each armed garrison. No one could perform the pilgrimage without being apprehended by them and sent to him.

Muhammad ibn al-Husayn al-Ashnani reported to me: My promise to perform the pilgrimage seemed impossible in those days because of the terror. Then I decided to risk my life to do it. A perfume merchant helped me to do that. We set out to perform the pilgrimage, hiding by day and travelling by night until we came to the area of al-Fakhiriyya.

From there we departed in the middle of the night and went into between two garrisons so that we came to the grave of al-Husayn. It was hidden from us. We began to sniff for signs of it and search for some aspect of it until we came upon it. The structure, which had been around it, had been torn down and burnt. Water had been made to flow over it

.and the place where bricks had been sunk down so that it had become like a ditch

We performed the rituals of the pilgrimage to him. We threw ourselves down on the ground and smelled a fragrance from it which I have never smelled anything like. It was like some kind of perfume. I asked the perfume merchant, who was with me, 'What fragrance is this?' 'By God, I have never smelled any kind of perfume like it,' he .replied

We made our farewells and put marks around the grave in a number of places. When al-Mutawakkil was killed, we gathered with a group of the descendants of Abu Talib and the Shi'a to go to the grave. We removed the marks and restored it to the state )which it had been before."(۱)

Al-Tabari has reported in his history concerning the events of the year ۲۳۶ (۲) : It has been mentioned that an official of the head of the shurta proclaimed in the area: 'After three hours, any man whom we find at his tomb, we will send to the dungeons.' The people fled. They were prevented from going there. The place was ploughed up and .the area around put under cultivation

We must presume that his terrorisation had some effect for sometime on the activity of the movement towards performing the pilgrimage and that it caused it to become moribund. Indeed the persecution seems to have increased in some periods to such an extent that the ۱۲th Imam (al-Mahdi Muhammad ibn



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Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani, Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, ۵۷۹-۹. Ibn Khallikan has also reponed: -۱ When al-Mutawakkil destroyed the tomb of al-Husayn in the year ۲۲۶, al-Bisami recited: 'By God, if it was the Umayyads who wrongfully killed the son of the daughter of their Prophet, his cousins have come against him in the same way. By my life, here is his tomb destroyed. They regretted that they had not participated in killing him. So they pursued him as a corpse.' Al-Tusi has reported in al-Amali (p. ۲۰۹) from-Abd Allah ibn Daniyya al-Turi, who said: I made the pilgrimage (hajj) in the year ۲۴۷ A.H. When I came from pilgrimage (hajj) and went to Iraq, I made a ziyara to the tomb of'Ali b. Abi

Talib in a state of fear because of the authorities. Then I went to make a ziyara to the tomb of al-Husayn. Its ground had been ploughed up, water had been poured over it, and oxen and men sent to work on it. With my own eyes, I saw oxen being driven over the ground. They were driven over it until they came to the tomb where they turned to the right and left of it. Even though they were beaten fiercely with sticks, it did not make them tread directly on the grave. It was impossible for me to make a ziyara. Therefore I headed for Damascus while reciting: By God, the Umayyads came against ..... Cf. Adab al-Taff, (Beirut, ١٩۶٩) ٣٢٧

.Al-Tabari, op cit., IX, ١٨٥ -٢

al-Hasan) was obliged to issue a general directive to the Shi'a in which he forbade them from performing pilgrimages to the cemetery of Quraysh in Baghdad (the sacred site of the graves of the two Imams, Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kazim and Muhammad (al-Jawad) and the sacred site of the grave of al-Husayn at Karbala'.(١)

Even though the method of repression and the method of destroying the grave, in addition to the former, had made the development of the movement to perform these pilgrimages moribund for some time, or had prevented them, they had not succeeded .in bringing them to an end in any final way

The Shi'a seized every opportunity available to activate the movement to perform the pilgrimage, especially after periods of repression and persecution. Moreover, after such periods, the movement to perform the pilgrimage used to return in a more intense and varied form that had been the case before its prevention and the .suppression and punishment of the pilgrims

The only explanation for that is the fact that al-Husayn's revolution and personality continued to grow without any interruption in popular consciousness in a way which could not be stopped at any point, such was its size and nature. It is still growing and .spreading its extent even to the present day

After having got to know about the pilgrimage from the external aspect -its motives, history, preventions, circumstances, time and continuous growth- it is necessary for us to become acquainted with it from within -if that is the correct



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١ - I'lam al-Wara, ۴٢١; al-Tusi, al-Ghayba, ١٧٢. It appears that in this period of the'Abbasid dynasty the terrorisation had become so much greater than what it had been in the beginning of the Abbasid government and in the Umayyad period that the Imam was impelled to order a temporary halt to be made in the movement of the Shi'a to make the ziyara. This situation had not ccurred in the time of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq from which the majority of the reports about making the ziyara in a state of fear come. In some of these he directs the Shi'a not to give any consideration to fear as an

excuse for not making the ziyara. For example, his words to Mu' awiya ibn Wahb: 'Do not abandon the ziyara of the tomb of al-Husayn because of fear .... Ibn Qawlawayh, .op. cit, ۱۲۶

expression. We shall examine examples from the texts which have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family of how the pilgrimage to al-Husayn was to be .performed, together with a brief analysis of each of the texts

We shall put forward here two examples of prayers of the ziyara of al-Husayn. One of these is long and detailed and the other is brief and general. The two examples should be considered as representative of dozens of texts which have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family about how the pilgrimage to al-Husayn should be performed. Of a similar nature are those texts which have been laid down about how the pilgrimage to the other Imams of the Holy Family, apart from al-Husayn, should .be performed

.(These two examples are reported from Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (Jafar al-Sadiq

## V. Two Examples Of The Ziyara To Al-Husayn

### The First Example .۱

It is reported from Imam Abu 'Abd Allah Ja' far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq that he said: :'When you enter the Ha'ir,(۱) say

۱. O God, this is a position by which you have honoured me and distinguished me. O .God, through it give me my desire for the reality of my faith in You and Your apostles

The visitation begins with thanking God for honouring and distinguishing the pilgrim by giving him the opportunity to perform the pilgrimage. Then he prays to God that He will answer him and grant him his request for the reality of his faith in God and His .prophets

۲. The peace of God be with you, son of the



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۱- Originally al-Ha'ir meant 'flat ground in which water flowed around', in the sense that there was no way for it to flow out. In the Traditions of the Holy Family, it is a name for the area surrounding the tomb of al-Husayn. It is a subject of dispute with

regard to the definition among the Jurists because of it being a place for the application of the religious law which give a traveller the choice of shortening the salat and completing it in the Ha'ir. Ibn Idris al-Hilli holds the view that it is the area which runs around the wall of the shrine and the mosque there. According to some, it is the whole of the courtyard surrounding the shrine and the mosque. Others maintain that it is the area which the dome erected over the grave shelters. Yet others state that it is the enclosure of the sacred garden and the sacred building which surround it including the portico, site of the martyrdom, the enclosure and other buildings. According to al-Majlisi, the author of Bihar al-Anwar, the obvious definition is the whole of the ancient courtyard, not the area defined in the Safavid dynasty. Al-Sayyid al-Hakim regards that the restriction to the most certain extent of the meaning of Ha'ir and sacred enclave (haram) is the area which is close to the sacred mausoleum. (Cf. Mustamsak, VIII, ٧١٨.) It appears that naming the tomb together with the area .around it as al-Ha'ir developed after al-Mutawakkil's destruction of the tomb

Apostle of God and the peace of His angels be with you in the pure fragrances which come to you and on you in the evening and the morning. Peace be with the angels of God, who bring men close to God. Peace be with the Muslims who have you in their .heart and who speak to you of your great virtue with their tongues

After discharging his duty of remembering God and thanking Him, the pilgrim begins by calling for peace to be with al-Husayn. Then he calls for peace to be with the angels of God. He goes on to call for peace to be with all those who believe in al-Husayn's .attitude and who declare their faith in him

This suggests that al-Husayn is not alone, nor is the pilgrim, who believes in al-Husayn's cause, alone; they are both part of a great movement which God blesses and sends His peace to its men and women through the angels. Part of this movement are the angels who bring men close to God; part of it are those people who believe .and trust in al-Husayn with their hearts and who declare their faith in him

I testify that you are truthful and trustworthy. I trust in what you called for, I trust in .۳ what you came for. You are the vengeance of God on earth for the blood whose .vengeance will only be attained on earth by your friends

O God, make me love their martyrdoms and their witness, so that

You bring me close to them and make me with the first of them and a follower of them .in this world and the Hereafter

At this stage of the pilgrimage, the pilgrim declares his close bond with al-Husayn in .terms of faith and principles

.First, he testifies to the truth of what al-Husayn came for and called for

Secondly, he testifies to the fact that al-Husayn, when he made the sacrifice in his true and sincere mission, did not belong to any man, nor one group of people He belonged to the whole of humanity. Therefore he is 'the vengeance of God'. His vengeance, then, is a common cause which profiteers and deviators cannot deal with. Only the friends of God can deal with it '. . . for the blood whose vengeance will only be '.attained on earth by your friends

After this testimony, which signifies the bond of reason and principle with God, the pilgrim then turns to ask that God bind him emotionally to al-Husayn . . . 'make me love their martyrdom and witness.' This is for the sake of joining them in their struggle so that he may be in their vanguard in witness and a follower of them in principle in this .world and the Hereafter

Glory be to God, to Whom the angels and the Kingdom of Heaven give praise, and .۴ through Whose names all His creation is sanctified. Glory be to God, the Most Holy Sovereign, the Lord of the angels and the Spirit. O

God, inscribe me within the group, which has come to the best of Your places, and .within the best of Your creatures

O God, curse idolatry and tyranny and curse their parties and followers. O God, make me bear witness to all the testimonies of God with the Holy Family of Your Prophet. O God, receive me as a Muslim and give me a sure place with those surviving inheritors who inherit Paradise, where they will dwell eternally among Your righteous .worshippers

Here there is a return to remembering and glorifying God. Then there is the prayer to God that He may accept his coming and his pilgrimage to al-Husayn, so that He will inscribe him among those who have come to him. This is a result of the pilgrim having .already declared the bond of principle and emotion with al-Husayn and his revolution

The pilgrim, then, announces his negative attitude which rejects the enemies of al-Husayn and of his call, including the Umayyads and the representatives of their policy .in history, who were their followers

He returns, after this, to the prayer with a supplication which comes from the depths of a soul thirsting to meet God in purity. Thus he prays to God that He make him among the group of His righteous worshippers whose lives form a continuous chain of .striving for the sake of God, the end of which comes through the faith and Islam

O God, ordain faith for me and confirm it in my heart. O .۵

God, make what I say with my tongue a reality in my heart and a religious precept in my actions. O God, make me one of those who have a firm footing with al-Husayn and .establish me among those who were martyred with him

At this stage of the pilgrimage, the pilgrim returns to asking God to establish him in the true faith. Here, the prayer of the ziyara includes assurance about an important problem of the true faith, in fact the most important problem concerning this faith. It is that this faith is not a belief alone; it is belief and works, ideology and conduct. What the pilgrim aspires to, is not a theoretical faith but a living active faith. In this way it becomes clear that the pilgrimage is employed in the service of a pure and practical .Islamic policy

The pilgrim, then, returns to al-Husayn and prays to God tha the will decree that he be among those who were martyred with al-Husayn in terms of those martyrs representing the apex of the vocation in which faith is transformed into works and .conduct

۶. I testify that you are the purity of the pure and pure of purity. Through you, the land is pure. The earth where you are is pure and your sanctuary is pure. I testify that you ordered and called for justice, and that you are the vengeance of God on His earth so .that He may arouse the feelings of all His creation because of you

The blessings of God be with your spirit and your body. You are the sincere one, the truthful one and confirmer of truth. May God destroy those who destroy you with their .hands and tongues

Here, purity means innocence from religious and moral sins. The holiness which al-Husayn enjoys arises out of his purity, not from any other source. This purity spreads wherever the pure man settles. The places, themselves, do not enjoy any holiness; their holiness only derives from them being a centre of action and activity by the pure .man

After that the pilgrim to al-Husayn testifies that his revolution was for the sake of justice; justice was its slogan and its objective. Thus, al-Husayn is the vengeance of God, not of any particular person or group, because the justice, which he strove to .establish, was the justice of God

Then, he testifies to his practical truth: a vocation which gives corroboration through action, effort, slogans and theoretical belief. This is what made him an opponent of those in power nominally in the name of Islam, who were men with slogans; the .reality of their conduct gave testimony to their insincerity

The pilgrim goes on to reiterate his renunciation of the enemies of al-Husayn, who .are, at the time, the enemies of justice and truth

۷. Peace be with you, O martyrs. You precede us and we follow you. Receive the good news of a meeting with God which has no discrepancy. God will attain your vengeance for you and He will overcome

His enemies on earth through you. You are the lords of the martyrs in this world and .the Hereafter

This salutation is to the men who bore witness with al-Husayn at Karbala'. On the occasion of every pilgrimage to al-Husayn there is a salutation and a prayer for peace .for the martyrs

In this salutation, the pilgrim declares that the martyrs precede him and he follows them, that they are all-both the pilgrim and the martyrs-companions in one journey of struggle. In this way the pilgrim binds his life to the path which the martyrs traveled .and for the sake of which they died

۸. Praise be to God, Who remains One in all matters. He created the creatures and none of their affairs is absent from His knowledge. The earth and those who are on it are sureties for your blood and your vengeance, O son of the Apostle of God, may God .bless you

I testify that you will have from God the support and victory which He promised you, that you will have from God the truthful promise of the destruction of your enemies .and the fulfilment of God's promise to you

I testify that those who follow you are the true ones of whom God said: Those are the truthful ones and the witnesses before their Lord, they will have their reward and (their light.(۱

In this section, after praising God and His unity, the pilgrim makes a declaration of the cosmic nature of al-Husayn's revolution, for the earth and those



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.Qur'an LVII, ۶۱; Ibn Qawlawayh, op. cit., ۷۵ -۱

on it will be the guarantors for his blood and are not transitory, for the confirmation of realities which are eternal and which extend into the future of time and of man. .Similarly it has deep roots in the past and present of man and time

Then, the pilgrim speaks of hope, for the martyrdom of al-Husayn and the end of his revolution do not bring an end to hope, nor do they throw one into the abyss of despair devoid of action. Al-Husayn's cause is the climax of war in a long uninterrupted history of the struggle for the sake of the Muslim, and for man, in .general

Therefore, the divine promise will be attained, must be attained. For this reason, the Shi'ite works for al-Husayn's policy through the inspiration of the attainment of God's .promise from this hope

This section calls to mind the words which al-Husayn wrote from Mecca when he decided to leave his brother, Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya and the Hashimites: '. . . Whoever joins me will be martyred and whoever does not join me will not attain (victory.'(١

At the end of this section of the prayer of the ziyara the pilgrim performing it renews .his testimony of the faithfulness of the supporters of al-Husayn

Praise be to God, Who has not taken a son and has no partner in His sovereignty. He .٩ created and determined everything. I testify that you called upon God and His Apostle, that you fulfilled his covenant with God and you carried



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١- Ibid

.out his words to God, that you strove for the sake of God until certainty came

May God curse a people which killed you. May God curse a people which treated you unjustly. May God curse a people which forsook you. May God curse a people which abandoned you. O God, I testify in the authority (wilaya) of those whom You and Your Apostles appointed. I testify to my renunciation of those whom You and Your Apostles .renounced

O God, curse those who lied against Your Apostle, destroyed Your Ka'ba, distorted Your Book, shed the blood of Your Holy Family, spread corruption in Your land and disparaged Your worshippers. O God, redouble the torment on them for what has taken place on Your roads, Your land and Your sea. O God, curse them in secret and in public in Your earth and Your Heaven.(۱)

In this section, the prayer of the ziyara reaches its climax. The pilgrim returns to praising and exalting God. We notice, here, that the remembrance, praise and exaltation of God permeates every section of the prayer of the ziyara. The pilgrim remembers God in a variety of ways throughout the prayer of the ziyara to al-Husayn, and his pilgrimage to al-Husayn is, itself, a kind of remembrance of God .through remembering one of His righteous servants who struggled for His sake

The pilgrim reiterates his declaration testifying that al-Husayn's revolution was for the sake of God. After this he curses all the forces opposed to al-Husayn's call and :revolution



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۱- ۷-۱۹۴ ,.Ibid.

those who forsook him; those who abandoned giving him support; and those who killed him.

He, then, declares his firm life-long bond with the policy of struggle of al-Husayn, and his absolute renunciation of the enemies of that policy.

In an intense emotional manner appropriate to the psychological state which he should have reached when he comes to this stage of the pilgrimage, the pilgrim reiterates his complete and absolute renunciation of the enemies by cursing them through mentioning the features and acts which require such a curse: they lied against the Apostle; they destroyed the Ka'ba; they distorted the Book; they shed the blood of the Holy Family; they disparaged Your worshippers.

Here are clear indications of specific historical events. These include the revolt of Ibn al-Zubayr, al-Hajjaj's bringing it to an end and the destruction of the Holy Ka'ba.

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This example of the prayer of the ziyara is representative of the largest part of the texts associated with the pilgrimage to al-Husayn.

It contains the following elements:

١. It remembers God and glorifies and praises Him. It declares the extent of His authority, omnipotence and magnitude;

٢. It honours al-Husayn and the Holy Family as being representatives of the Islamic way of life, of the righteous conduct required by the Islamic way of life and of the true causes of a Muslim and of mankind, in general.

٣. It mentions al-Husayn's revolution, his witness, and the martyrs and witnesses with him as the climax of the struggle to realise truth and achieve justice. It

gives these a universal and cosmic quality in terms of those who are witnesses of it '.being 'the vengeance of God

.It concentrates on the hope for the coming victory and it rejects despair .۴

It declares the life-long bond between the Shi'ite and al-Husayn and his policy. It .۵ also declares the absolute renunciation of all forces whose policy opposes the policy .of al-Husayn

All these elements are repeated in the prayer of visitation in several ways, in a variety of expressions and from different angles in order to attain one aim: to make al-Husayn's revolution, insofar as it is an application of Islam and its principles, something vibrant with life in man's consciousness, something which inspires him in .his daily life through the ideas which are appropriate to it

### The Second Example .۲

It is reported from Imam Abu 'Abd Allah Ja'far al-Sadiq that he said: 'When you come :to the tomb of al-Husayn stand at the door and say

.Peace be with you, O heir of Adam, the chosen of God .۱

.Peace be with you, O heir of Noah, the prophet of God

.Peace be with you, O heir of Abraham, the dear friend of God

.Peace be with you, O heir of Moses, the one addressed by God

.Peace be with you, O heir of Jesus, the spirit of God

.Peace be with you, O heir of Muhammad, the beloved of God

.Peace be with you, O heir of 'Ali, the entrusted delegate of the Apostle of God

.Peace be with you, O heir of al-Hasan, who gave satisfaction

Peace be with

.you, O heir of Fatima, daughter of the Apostle of God

In this example, the revolution of al-Husayn is presented from an angle which differs .from the angle in which this revolution has been presented in the previous example

Al-Husayn's revolution had been accused by the regime of having departed from the general policy. It was a rebellion against the legal authority and it caused dissension in the community. Therefore it was an aberration in the course of Islam and because of .that it was without legality

The Umayyads attempted to give this quality to the revolution of al-Husayn. It is indisputable that the apparatus of information at that time -the hired Traditionists and the story- tellers- attempted to give this picture of al-Husayn's revolution to the .masses

This attempt was not ordained to have its hoped for success, even though it did succeed in forming some of the insignificant views of some jurists and Sufis, fragments of which we find in some of their books, represented by unfriendly .expressions towards the revolution of al-Husayn

The Imams of the Holy Family and their followers among the scholars undertook to refute this falsification. Instead of the revolution of al-Husayn being made unlawful, the whole Umayyad regime was made unlawful. In the same way its extensions in time as represented by any regime, which bore the slogans of the Umayyads, were made unlawful. In a general way, the pilgrimage was one of the means of refuting and exposing this. This example of the prayer of the

.ziyara is more concerned with these points than other prayers of the ziyara

In this example, the revolution of al-Husayn is closely connected to the movement of Islam which is deep-rooted in history of the life of humanity. It goes back in time to the first human existence which brought Islam in its first form on the earth as represented by Adam, the father of mankind. It goes on to Noah, Abraham, Moses, .Jesus and Muhammad and then comes to 'Ali

From this viewpoint, the revolution is not an event without any precedent. It is part of the movement of Islam in history. It is an extension of the movement of the prophets .of God and their entrusted delegates in time, place and man

Therefore, it enjoys legality and thus it is its right that it should receive the support of all the Muslims. Its legal and political opponent, i.e. the regime, is what does not enjoy legality. Therefore it is men's duty to destroy the latter in order to bring victory to the .revolution

This is one of the aims of this example of the prayers of the ziyara Perhaps it has the .greatest importance in the view of the Imams of the Holy Family

Another aim is that the Shi'ite Muslim should be aware that, through the revolution of al-Husayn, he is linked to Islam in its furthest extension. Since Islam has acted in .steering time in this manner, it does not stop at the revolution of al-Husayn

Rather, it takes a new

impetus and a new strength from this revolution and continues to accumulate the power of an active transforming movement through the conscious act of heroism motivated by a faith, which believes in it and works for the good of mankind through it .and by its guidance

.Peace be with you, O truthful witness .۲

.(Peace be with you, O pious reverend entrusted delegate (wasi

.Peace be with you, O proof of God and son of His proof

Peace be with the souls who dismounted at your open field of battle and remained .where you stopped

.Peace be with the angels of God, who surround you

In the previous section the pilgrim declared his awareness of the position of the revolution of al-Husayn in the historical movement of Islam, and his awareness of its legality and the lack of legality of the regime which it rose against. After that, the pilgrim declares, in this section of the prayer of ziyara, his awareness of the qualities which gave al-Husayn and his revolution this position in the history of Islam and its .historical movement

First, he is truthful and a witness. A truthful person transforms his faith into a living actual application. He does not leave it confined to the realm of ideology, nor does he seek comfortable justifications for himself. This truthfulness leads him on to become a witness so that he seals his life with the most glorious act of truth. He seals it by .witnessing with it through, and for the sake of, his faith

This reality is

the reality of truthfulness and witnessing. It is what makes it suitable that he and his revolution should be among the outstanding features of the movement of Islam in .history

Secondly, he is the entrusted delegate (wasi). He is the entrusted delegate of his brother, Imam al-Hasan, who was the entrusted delegate of his father, Imam 'Ali, .who was the entrusted delegate of the Apostle of God

He is a pious reverend entrusted delegate. Through the reality of his being an entrusted delegate, he works for the religion of God and for the umma. Thus he bears .a heavy responsibility and sacrifices his life to carry it out

Thirdly, he is the proof of God and the son of His proof. This quality comes from his being a pious reverend entrusted delegate (wasi) of God. Through this quality, he was .the heir of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad

After Muhammad, he was the heir of 'Ali and al-Hasan. They are proofs of God to His creatures. He is like them in being a proof of God to His creatures. He is a continuation .of them, and his revolution is an extension of their revolutions and calls

He explained to men and summoned them to God so that the authorities of his time no longer had any argument or excuse for shunning the guidance of God and the .faithful application of the Islamic way of life demanded by God

Finally the pilgrim takes note of the fact that al-Husayn was not alone in his

truthfulness and his witness. His supporters participated with him in a degree of truthfulness and witness. They, then, are also a model which should be imitated, beacons through which one will receive light on the long journey to truth and justice. The pilgrim calls for peace to be with them to show his awareness of their rank and .their great role

The pilgrim brings this section to a close by calling for peace to be with the blessed .angels who surround the grave of al-Husayn and the grave of the martyrs

I testify that you have performed the salat and you have paid the alms-tax (zakat), .٣ you have enjoined the good and forbidden evil; you have worshipped God sincerely so that certainty came to you. Peace be with you and the mercy and blessings of God.(١)

At the end, the pilgrim declares his awareness of the essence and core of al-Husayn's life. It is living Islam. The relationship with God is represented by salat, a real relationship which always exists in daily activity. The salat is not merely the formal prayer which ends at the call for peace in it. The salat with the believer is something .which encompasses within its nature the life and actions of the person praying

The relationship with men is represented by the alms-tax (zakat) a form of giving. Thus his position with regard to men is the position of the giver, someone who sacrifices and pays no attention to himself and his own interests for the sake



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.Ibid., ٢٠۶-٧ -١

.of others

Movement in society is represented by enjoining good and forbidding evil. It is the .movement of building society, building righteous man and a clean life

The first feature of all these manifestations of the life of al-Husayn -in relation to God, in relation to men and as a movement in society- is absolute sincerity towards God, .total absorption in God and shunning everything else except God

* * *

These are two examples of the dozens of texts which deal with the visitation to al-Husayn and his fellow martyrs at Karbala' at all times and at specific times previously .indicated

The scope of the ritual of visitation has been broadened to include all the Imams of the Holy Family and the supporters who were martyred alongside them, or who accomplished an important area of work for Islam during the time of the Imams and .at their direction

The overwhelming majority of the texts concerned with the pilgrimages to the other Imams and their followers repeat the honour given to al-Husayn and his followers, .the horror at what befell them and the renunciation of their enemies

The pilgrimage fulfils the role which it is intended to fulfil in the formation and historical existence of the Shi'ite Muslim. It keeps him in living vibrant contact with the Imams of the Holy Family, with their vision and with their movement which provides .opposition and yet is constructive

It keeps him in contact with the Islam which confronts in order to remove injustice and establish justice among all

the people -not with Islam through its official governing institutions. In the eras of the rule of Islam, neither the Holy Family nor their Shi'a have had any share worth mentioning in the official institutions of the government of Islam.

### VI. The Ziyara in the Poetry of Lament for Al-Husayn

In the odes of the poets of lament for al-Husayn which they composed in praise of and in lament for the Holy Family, and in lament for al-Husayn, they have given expression to the ritual of the ziyara since the first half of the fourth century. It is a date for which we possess poetic evidence. Even though we can estimate that the poetry of lament included this purpose before this date, there is not much before it.

That is because the reflection of any concern of the people in poetry implies two things: (i) This concern which the poetry reflects, is a common subject which excites the interest of many groups of people of diverse schools of thought and views.

This common subject excites in the people emotions and feelings of love, or awe, or hostility towards it. (ii) There is no danger, or at least no great danger, in the expression and practice of this common subject. Otherwise the poets would not express it in poetry which came readily to men's tongues and which was recited at their gatherings.

In the light of this analysis we can judge that poetry gave expression to the pilgrimage from several aspects out of the total of its purposes when the pilgrimage became a common

concern for the Shi'a, and was no longer limited to a selected few among them, when it became an established part of their religious activity which had a socio-political .quality

This is from one aspect. From another, poetry probably gave expression to the pilgrimage when it became possible to carry it out with security and the safety of the .pilgrim was not exposed to danger

We can deduce that these two matters -the widespread nature of the pilgrimage and freedom to carry it out with security- were achieved in the second stage of the 'Abbasids, after the Buwayhids had gained real control over Iraq and Iran and the .Hamdanids had gained control in Syria

In this period, popular consciousness attained an understanding of the pilgrimage in a comprehensive form. This consciousness came to express its understanding of it on numerous occasions when thousands of people gathered. Karbala' began to witness a .constant movement of pilgrims coming to the tomb of al-Husayn

Then the pilgrimage became one of the topics of the poetry about al-Husayn, which the poets expressed in a variety of ways and at which they looked from different .aspects

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Perhaps Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Murad al-Dabbi al-Halabi al-Antaki, known as al-Sunawbari (d. ۳۳۴) was among the first poets of lamentation who reflected the subject of- the pilgrimage to al-Husayn in their poetry. Al-.Sunawban spent his life between Aleppo and Damascus

For this reason, his poetry's inclusion of references to the pilgrimage in a number of

his odes discloses, without any doubt, an important historical fact about this subject, namely that groups of pilgrims at this historical period were flowing into Karbala' from the Syrian area. This is a phenomenon which, first of all, proves that the ritual of ziyara had become a common popular Shi'ite practice which went beyond the .geographical region of Karbala', that is Iraq, to other geographical regions

Secondly it proves that the element of security had increased to such an extent that it allowed great numbers of people to cross this long distance between Syria and Iraq .without very great fear

In one ode in lamentation for al-Husayn, al-Sunawbari called on the pilgrims to stop at .the place on the bank of the Euphrates and described their weeping at the graves

In another ode, he tells of their camels halting at the place of grief and the people smelling the musk and kissing the camphor of the ground. They perform the pilgrimage there, which is recommended, and they grieve for him with tears flowing .down

In a third ode, he urges the people to travel straight. The pilgrimage to the Imam of .guidance is the best pilgrimage which can be made

It appears that the third ode may be adressed in farewell to a group who are heading .for Karbala' to perform the pilgrimage

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Abu 'Abd Allah al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn al-Hajjaj al-Nili al-Baghdadi (d. ۳۹۱) comes almost half a century later than al-Sunawburi so that he reflects for us, in one of the

beautiful passages of his poetry, a picture of the pilgrimage, which indicates the depth of the penetration of the ritual into popular consciousness so that it has become an .institution with traditional practices

In his ode, al-Husayn ibn al-Hajjaj has spoken about the pilgrimage to the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. It gives a picture of the circumstances .which were prevailing then at the sanctuary of Imam al-Husayn

Al-Husayn b. al-Hajjaj calls on 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He says that the pilgrims may gain a cure or reward which they seek. It instructs the pilgrims to be in a state of ritual purity .before entering the tomb

They should prepare themselves to answer his call and go round his tomb seven times. At the door to the tomb, they should stand and call for peace to be with the people of knowledge and nobility. Then they should acknowledge that they are holding fast to the faith, because the Imam is the firm bond which binds them to the faith. They hope that he will intercede for them, that no harm will come to them and .they will have no fear

These verses depict some of the popular customs at the pilgrimage, as well as .expressing some of the ideas which were circulating in some of the texts

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Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn Hammad ibn 'Ubayd Allah ibn Hammad al-'Adawi al-'Abdi al-Basri (d. end of ۴th century), was a poet who was a contemporary of al-Husayn ibn al-Hajjaj. In one of

his odes of lament, he speaks of the ritual of the pilgrimage and the Divine blessing .which are promised to those who perform it

He tells the pilgrims to al-Husayn that they may receive forgiveness for their sins and safety from Hell. When they call upon al-Husayn, he will answer their prayers whether they are said aloud or in secret. For al-Husayn is alive with God. They should go round .his tomb and kiss the soil of his grave, for al-Husayn possesses very great purity

In another ode, the poet speaks of the great effect the deaths of the sons of the Prophet at Karbala' had. He mentions that whoever sees their graves begins to weep. He describes the light which shines on these graves and the angels which go back and forth from them. These are graves with the power to ward off harm and evil and pilgrims seek cures for their evil thoughts. Whenever one sees them, one is reminded of the day on which al-Husayn died and the words he spoke in admonition to his .enemies

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Al-Sharif al-Radi Abu al-Hasan Muhammad ibn Abi, Ahmad al-Husayn al-Musawi (۳۵۹-۴۰۶) spoke of the ritual of pilgrimage in one of his beautiful poems. In it he revealed his desire to perform the pilgrimage to the Commander of the faithful and Imam al-Husayn and he said that he quenched this thirst in his heart by performing the pilgrimage to the two tombs of the two Imams (al-Kazimayn) Imam Musa b. Ja'far and Imam

.Muhammad al-Jawad in Baghdad

This demonstrates that in this period performing the pilgrimage to the tombs of the .Imams of the Holy Family in Iraq had become a popular general practice

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Abu al-Hasan Mihyar ibn Marzawayh al-Daylami, the famous poet, (d. ۴۲۸) was one of those in this period who spoke of the ritual of pilgrimage in an ode of lament for Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, and Imam al-Husayn. That was in the month of .Muharram in ۳۹۲

In his discussion he shows that the pilgrimage involves the practice of blessing the soil of the tomb of al-Husayn. It appears from this text that those who performed the pilgrimage used to go back with some of the soil of Karbala' which they used to sprinkle on those of their family and friends who used to ask for it as a means of seeking blessings and seeking cures. This practice does not exist in the present time, .and it is a point which ought to be studied from the historical angle

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Al-Sharif al-Murtada al-Qasim 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Musa al-Musawi, known as 'Alam al-Huda (the sign of guidance) (۳۵۵-۴۳۶) is one of the distinguished men whose poetry reflects the ritual of the pilgrimage. In it he mentions the healing effect on the soul of .performing the pilgrimage

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In this way poets of lament for al-Husayn have continued to reflect in their poetry the ritual of the pilgrimage to the tomb of al-Husayn and the rest

of the tombs of the Holy Family. They are expressing the doctrinal and emotional relationship of the Shi'ite with al-Husayn, the martyr. This relationship considers the .pilgrimage as one of the most outstanding means of expressing it

There has been much poetry dealing with the subject of the pilgrimage in recent times, even to the extent of some poets making it the sole purpose of some odes. This reflects the growth of this ritual in popular consciousness as one of the manifestations .of the revolution of al-Husayn in popular consciousness

## VII. Three Other Ziyaras Concerned With the Revolution of Al-Husayn

### The ziyara to al-'Abbas ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib .۱

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Al-'Abbas was born in ۲۶. His mother was Fatima, daughter of Hizam ibn Khalid ibn Rabi' (he was the brother of the poet Labid) ibn 'Amir ibn Kilab ibn Rabi'a ibn 'Amir ibn .'Sa'sa'a, of the tribe of Kilab. She was famous for her kunya 'Umm al-Banin

The Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib married her at the suggestion of his brother, 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, who was an expert in the genealogy of the Arabs. He had asked 'Aqil to look for a woman for him who would give birth to Arab warriors so that .he could marry her and she could bear him a noble son. 'Aqil indicated her to him

After the death of Lady Fatima, the radiant, he had married her, or perhaps after his .marriage to Umama, daughter of Zaynab, daughter of the Apostle of God

She bore the Commander of the faithful four sons. They were al-'Abbas (he was the eldest of them), 'Abd Allah, Ja'far and

Uthman. These were her sons (banin) and she was given her kunya after them so' . 'that she was called ' Umm al-Banin

.'They were all martyred in front of their brother, Imam al-Husayn, at Karbala

Al-'Abbas had lived with his father, Imam 'Ali, for fourteen years. On the day he was .martyred, he was about thirty-four years of age

He married Lubaba, daughter of 'Ubayd Allah ibn al- 'Abbas ibn'Abd al-Muttalib, and she bore him two sons. They were 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Abbas ibn 'Ali and al-Fadl ibn al-'Abbas ibn 'Ali. Through the latter he received his kunya so that he is called Abu al-Fadl .al-'Abbas

He was a mighty horseman with tall stature. 'He used to ride a sturdy horse and his feet could trail along the ground.' He was brave and was given the nickname, 'the moon of the Hashimites', because of his beauty. At Karbala' after his martyrdom he was given the nickname 'the bringer of water', and 'the father of the water-skin', because he risked his life to provide water for al-Husayn's camp after the Umayyad .army blockaded it from water

Then he had made more than one raid to the Euphrates to bring water. He was martyred in one of these attempts on ١٠th Muharram after his hands had been cut off during the battle while he was holding a water-skin which he had filled with water in .order to give a drink to the children who were parched with thirst

He was the standard-bearer of al-Husayn at

Karbala'. When al-Husayn put his followers into their positions early in the morning of ١٠th Muharram, his place was in the centre. He was martyred after his brothers whom .he asked to go before him into the battle

ii

Al-'Abbas was a man of knowledge. In this connection, it is reported that the '.Commander of the faithful, 'Ali, said: 'My son, al-'Abbas, has fed well on knowledge

Concerning him, it is reported that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said: 'Our uncle, al-'Abbas, was penetrating in his insight and firm in faith. He had a position with God, for which '.all the other martyrs envied him

It seems from the rajaz poetry, which is attributed to him and which he used to recite at the battle in which he was martyred - it seems from this rajaz poetry that he was at a very high level of awareness of his faith. Despite the fact that he took part in a battle which his brother led against a family which was hostile to his family, not the slightest hint of his personal feeling appears in his rajaz verse. In it, he only speaks of the :religion which his brother, al-Husayn, embodied by being Imam. He recited

By God, if you cut off my right hand, I will still defend my religion. And an Imam who .speaks truly and with certainty, the pure and faithful offspring of the Prophet

Al-'Abbas is singled out from all the other martyrs, whether Hashimite or not, with an independent grave on which a great shrine

.has been built

iii

In all the poetry of lament which has been composed about Karbala', al-'Abbas is mentioned as one of the martyrs, most outstanding in rank, or the most outstanding of them in rank, after al-Husayn. Later poets of the Shi'a have composed special .poems of lament for him

In the rites of remembrance for the death of al-Husayn, he has a special position. Thus he is remembered with special honour and is favoured by the full description of his life and martyrdom. In the rites of 'Ashura' special rites of remembrance for his death are held. The preachers on the pulpit during the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in Iraq, usually speak of him on the night of ٧th Muharram.

Al-'Abbas enjoys a very strong presence in the popular consciousness of Iraqi and Iranian Shi'ites, which is clearly reflected in the intense and crowded thronging to .perform a visitation to his tomb

Al-'Abbas occupies a special place in the pilgrimage. Whenever his name is mentioned, it is associated with the call for peace to be with him and his position is .praised in nearly every one of the prayers of pilgrimage for Imam al-Husayn

Similarly pilgrimages specially concerned with him, have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family. In what follows we will mention an example of one of them which Abu Hamza al-Thumali has reported from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. Ja'far al-Sadiq said: 'When you want to perform a pilgrimage to the tomb of al-'Abbas ibn 'Ali, it is on

the bank of the Euphrates opposite the Ha'ir, stand at the door of the enclosure and :say

The peace of God, the peace of His angels who bring men close to God, of His .١ Prophets who He has sent, of His righteous worshippers, of all the martyrs and men of truth, and the pure blessings, which come constantly, be with you, O son of the .Commander of the faithful

I testify to your submission to Islam, truthfulness, loyalty and devotion to the successor of the Prophet sent by God, the chosen grandson, the knowing guide, the one entrusted with authority who conveyed his mission, the man who was wronged .and killed

May God reward you with the best reward on behalf of His Apostle, on behalf of the Commander of the faithful and on behalf of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the blessings of God be with them, for what you endured, sacrificed and suffered. May the result be .blessings in Paradise

May God curse those who killed you. May God curse those who were ignorant of your rights and who scorned your sacredness. May God curse those who prevented you .from getting the water of the Euphrates

Throughout the prayer for peace in this form, the prayer of the ziyara reveals the group to which al-'Abbas belongs. He belongs to the angels, the prophets, the martyrs and the men of truth. The passage which follows the section praying for peace explains the reasons for al-'Abbas belonging to these groups of righteous .worshippers of God

He is

a Muslim, truthful, loyal and devoted to Imam al-Husayn. That is to say, he is loyal to his religious commitment which arises out of him being a sincere Muslim because, at .this point, al-Husayn is not a brother, he is the leader of Islam

This section of the prayer of ziyara ends with the prayer that God will reward al-'Abbas for his noble stance. Then it renounces, with a curse, his enemies as the enemies of religious law. In this section also the distinguished role of al-'Abbas is given prominence in a way which preserves his memory in popular consciousness as .the most outstanding of those concerned to provide the thirsty camp with water

I testify that you were killed unjustly and that God will fulfil his promise to you. O son .۲ of the Commander of the faithful, I have come as a pilgrim to you. My heart submits to you; and I will follow you. My support will always be ready for you until God gives His .judgement, and He is the best of judges

I will be with you, with you, not with your enemies. I am one of the believers with you and will suffer with you. I am not one of the unbelievers with those who oppose you .and killed you. May God kill a people who killed you with their hands and tongues

In this section, the pilgrim bears witness to the justice of the cause, for which al-'Abbas was martyred by saying that he was killed

unjustly. Therefore his killers must be unjust. Yet the pilgrim is not in despair because the ultimate result of al-'Abbas' struggle is that he is certain of God's victory and the .establishment of a state of truth and justice

The pilgrim proclaims his commitment to the same policy of struggle, which al-'Abbas had followed and for which he had died. In the same way he proclaims his renunciation of the opposite policy, the policy of injustice which the Umayyads .followed

.۳ Peace be with you, O righteous worshipper, dedicated to God, to His Apostle, to the Commander of the faithful and to al-Hasan and al-Husayn, may peace be with them. Peace be with you and the mercy, blessings and favour of God be with you, your soul .and your body

I testify, and God is my witness, that you died like those who fought at Badr for the sake of God, who acted in good faith toward Him in fighting against His enemies who did their utmost in support of His chosen ones and who defended His loved ones. May God reward you with the best and most abundant reward of any one of those who fulfilled their pledge to Him, answered His call and obeyed those whom He had .entrusted with authority

I testify that you exceeded the utmost in good faith and that you gave the ultimate in striving. Then God raised you among the martyrs and put your soul alongside the souls of the marytrs. He has given you one

of the largest and best places in His Paradise and has gathered you with the prophets, the truthful ones, the martyrs and the righteous men as a good companion for them.

I testify that you have never demeaned yourself nor recoiled. You died in full awareness of your situation, emulating the righteous and following the example of the Prophets. God will unite us with you, with His Apostle and with His saints in the mansions of those who are Humble before God. Indeed He is the most merciful of those who are merciful.

In this passage the pilgrim begins his address by asking for peace to be with him and by a prayer in which he demonstrates the element of the faithful obedience shown by al-'Abbas which arises out of an awareness of duty and a commitment to it.

After the call for peace and the prayer, the pilgrim gives testimony that this obedience was not formal; it expressed itself through practical commitment. Here a group is shown to which al-'Abbas belongs in a more defined way, namely those who fought at Badr. These men occupy the highest rank in the processions of noble martyrs who bore witness to the truth with their lives in front of the Apostle of God.

Then follows the testimony that in his striving al-'Abbas went beyond the standard required by virtue of being an obedient Muslim to a much higher standard. He 'exceeded the utmost in good faith and gave the ultimate in striving.'

Next there is the testimony

that he carried out his magnificent role at Karbala', resolutely facing death in the end through a conscience governed by principle. His was not an unconscious faith, nor a blind faith because there is no blind faith in Islam. '. . . You died in full awareness of your situation ....' Therefore there was, in his high moral attitude, that with which he achieved the highest Islamic moral standards in transcending one's personal nature.(۱) In this attitude, '. . . he never demeaned himself nor recoiled.' This is confirmation that his attitude was the result of consciousness, 'full awareness'.(۲)

Abu Hamza al-Thumali has reported from Imam Ja'far al Sadiq that he said that when he parted from al-'Abbas, he should say:

۴. I bid farewell to you, commending you to God and asking for your concern and attention. I recite my call for peace to be with you. We believe in God, His Apostle, His Book and what he brought from God. O God, decree that we should be with the martyrs. O God, do not make this the last pilgrimage to the grave of the cousin of Your Prophet. For as long as You preserve me, let me make pilgrimages to him. Then Bather me with him and his fathers in Paradise. O God, bring recognition between him, Your Apostle and Your saints and myself.

O God, grant blessings to Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and receive me as someone who believes in you, who acknowledges the truth of your



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۱- Cf. my book Bayn al-Jahiliyya wa-al-Islam (Beirut. ۱۹۷۵), the chapter on morals (al-akhlaq).

۲- Cf. my book Ansar al Husayn, op. cit., ۱۶۵-۷۰, where there is a study of 'the people of awareness'.

Apostle and the authority (wilaya) of'Ali ibn Abi Talib and the Imams among his (offspring and who renounces their enemies. O Lord, I have been pleased to do that.(۱)

This form of farewell reveals the depth of the emotional association of principle between the pilgrim and al-'Abbas. It links them with bonds of love which arise out of both of them being committed to one principle in which the one to whom the .pilgrimage is being made represents the role of the exemplary model

Then the pilgrim declares his faith and directs his prayer towards God, asking Him to create a permanent association with al-'Abbas both in this world and the Hereafter. He asks God to strengthen him in faith and keep him loyal to Islam and to the .authority of the Imams of the Holy Family

### The ziyara of 'Ali (al-Akbar) ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib .۲

i

Ali ibn al-Husayn was born on ۱۱th Shaban in the year ۳۳. When he was martyred on' ۱۰th Muhharram in the year ۶۱, he was twenty-seven years and five months old. His mother was Layla bint Abi Murra ibn 'Urwa ibn Mas'ud al-Thaqafi. Urwa ibn Mas'ud had been an important intermediary between Mecca and al-Ta 'if. The grandmother of 'Ali's mother was Maymuna bint Abi Sufyan, the sister of Mu'awiya and the aunt of .Yazid

Ali ibn al-Husayn had the kunya of Abu al-Hasan. There is a report from Imam al-Rida that he married a slave-mother of his child (umm walad) but we doubt the authenticity of this report. However, in the prayer for his ziyara there



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Ibn Qawlawayh, op. cit., ۲۵۶-۷ -۱

is some evidence that he had children. It says, 'May God bless you, your offspring, your family, your fathers and your sons.' It is, nonetheless, possible that the words 'your sons' (abna' ika) may be an addition of a copyist or a misrepresentation of 'your .(fathers' (aba’ika

The kunya (naming a man as father of so and so, in this case Abu al-Hasan) is not evidence that he was married and had children. It may have been given out of the appropriateness of the name, 'Ali to go with the kunya, Abu al-Hasan -this was the .name and kunya of his grandfather, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib

The custom was carried out of giving a child a kunya when he was born as being among some of the practices mentioned by legal scholars, in accordance with reports that have been handed down from the Imams of the Holy Family concerning this matter. In any case whether 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (al-Akbar) was in fact married is .doubtful in our view

Ali was given the nickname al-Akbar (the elder) to distinguish him from his brother 'Ali .ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin

He was like the Apostle of God in form, temperament and speech and had a .handsome face

Ali al-Akbar was the first of the Hashimite martyrs after all the supporters of al-Husayn, from outside the Hashimite family, had been martyred. When only his family were left with al-Husayn, one after the other came to say farewell to him. 'Ali al-Akbar was the first to ask his

father's permission to go into battle. Al-Husayn bowed his head and wept. Then he :raised in supplication to God as he said

O God, I testify against these people, against whom has advanced a young man who most resembles your Apostle in form, temperament and speech. When we used to .long for Your Prophet, we used to look at him

When he went forward to fight, he was offered security in view of his kinship with Yazid ibn Mu'awiya through the grandmother of his mother, Maymuna bint Abi Sufyan. He refused the offer of security which had been given to him, saying, 'Kinship '.with the Apostle of God has a greater right to be observed

He had directed himself into battle while suffering from severe thirst. He returned to the camp of his father, Imam al-Husayn, after having fought fiercely and having killed a great number. His thirst became unendurable. When he told his father about his thirst, the latter wept and said, 'Help will come for it. Soon you will meet your grandfather; he will give you a drink from his cup after which you will never be thirsty.' .He took his tongue and licked it, and he gave him his ring to put in his mouth

.Ali al-Akbar returned to the battle and died a martyr

ii

Ali al-Akbar enjoyed the highest level of consciousness in faith. There is a text which gives clear evidence of this fact. A conversation took place between Imam al-Husayn and his son, 'Ali al-Akbar after al-Husayn and his

.followers had learnt of what had happened to Muslim ibn 'Aqil in Kufa

The end to which the revolution was coming was clear to everyone. While al-Husayn was continuing the journey with his followers, he was heard to say: 'We belong to God '.and to Him we shall return. Praise be to God, Lord of the universe

.Ali al-Akbar asked him why he had recited the verse of return used for those who die'

The Imam replied, 'I became drowsy and my head nodded off. A horseman appeared before me, saying: "The people are advancing and death is coming towards you." '.Then I knew that our lives were bringing the news of our deaths to us

'?God will not show evil towards us,' replied 'Ali al-Akbar. 'Aren't we in the right'

Yes,' he answered, 'it is to Him that all men must return.' 'Father,' declared' Ali al-' '.Akbar, 'as long as we are in the right, we should have no cares

May God reward you with the best reward a son can receive from his father," (exclaimed al-Husayn.(١

Mention is made of 'Ali al-Akbar in all the lamentation poetry which has been composed about al-Husayn. Later poets of the Shi'a have also composed special poems of lament about him. In their odes they recall his qualities, the way he asked his father's permission to fight, his thirst and the sorrow, grief and distress of his .mother, Layla, when he was martyred

Ali al-Akbar enjoys an outstanding place in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.' One of the nights of



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There is some confusion over this 'Ali al-Akbar. According to Shaykh al-Mufid, he is -١ 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, while, according to Shaykh Shams al-Din, he is the'Ali who was murdered at Karbala'. Nonethless, it still seems incorrect to attribute this conversation with Imam al-Husayn to him, for it actually took place between Imam al-Husayn and

the ten days to 'Ashura ' is devoted to him, when preachers on the pulpit tell the story .of his martyrdom

He has also been given a distinguished place in the rituals of ziyara; in all the rituals of ziyara to al-Husayn, his son, 'Ali-Akbar, is especially mentioned. In the prayers of his ziyara there are expressions calling for peace to be with him, expressions of honour .and praise for his struggle and expressions of distress for what happened to him

Everything which comes in the ritual of ziyara to him comes within the ritual of ziyara to Imam al-Husayn. As far as we know, there is no repetition of it in an independent ziyara as there is in the case of his uncle, al 'Abbas. Perhaps this results from the fact that his grave is nearby the grave of his father, Imam al-Husayn, in contrast to al-'Abbas whose grave is far from the grave of his brother.

Among the prayers of ziyara for'Ali al-Akbar which come within the prayers of ziyara for his father, Imam al-Husayn, is one which Abu Hamza al-Thumali has reported from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, who said after he had taught him how to perform the ziyara to Imam al-Husayn that then he should pass on to the grave of'Ali ibn al-Husayn which is at the foot of al-Husayn's and say:

Peace be with you, O son of the Apostle, and the mercy and blessings of God, son of the successor (khalifa) of the Apostle of God, son of

the daughter of the Apostle of God. May the peace, the mercy and the blessings of God be multiplied with you whenever the sun rises and sets. Peace be with you and .the mercy and blessings of God

I would sacrifice my mother and my father for you, that you were unjustly slaughtered and killed. I would sacrifice my mother and father for you, that when you came before your father, he reckoned Heaven would be yours and he wept for you, with his hearts burning with pain for you. He raised your blood in his hand towards the .clouds in the sky

No drop of it came back to him. No moaning comforted your father for your loss. He said farewell to you at your departure. Your place with God is with your fathers who have died and with your mothers in Heaven. Before God, I renounce those who killed .and slaughtered you

This section of the ziyara begins with a prayer for peace to be with him, in which the kinship of 'Ali al-Akbar is shown. This kinship involves the Apostle of God. 'Ali al-Akbar is the son (that is a direct great-grandson), of the Apostle of God and he is the son of the successor (khalifa) of the Apostle of God (that is, he is a grandson of 'Ali ibn Abi .(Talib

The same description is frequently used about al-Husayn without mentioning him by name. This goes to show the position of sanctity which 'Ali al-Akbar enjoys in terms

of the fact that all the descriptions of his kinship come together with the 'Apostle of .'God

The prayer of the ziyara conveys scenes from Karbala' in the emotional cry from the heart, 'I would sacrifice my mother and father for you'; the scene of 'Ali al-Akbar coming forward to his father to ask for permission to go into battle; the scene of al-Husayn bending over the prostrate body of his son, taking his blood into his hand and raising it to the sky. Then the pilgrim renounces those who have commited the crime .of killing him

The peace of God, the peace of His angels who bring men close to God, the peace of His prophets whom he has sent, the peace of his righteous worshippers be with you, my master, son of my master, and the mercy and blessings of God be with you. May God bless you, your offspring, your family, your fathers, your sons and your mother, the best of people, the pious ones from whom God has removed all evil and whom He .has made pure

Peace be with you, son of the Apostle of God, son of the Commander of the faithful, son of al-Husayn ibn 'Ali and the mercy and blessings of God. May God curse your killers. May God curse those of them who survived and those of them who died. May God curse those who scorned your rights and those who killed you. May God curse those of them who survived and those of

.them who died. May God and His angels bless you and grant you much peace

In this passage, the pilgrim repeats his call for peace to be with 'Ali al-Akbar in another form. This peace is from God and a select group of humans: prophets and their sincere sons. During this call for peace, he shows that this elect group is one to which 'Ali al-Akbar belongs. In the same way the other form of this call for peace shows the relationships of kinship of 'Ali al-Akbar from another angle which differs .from the previous passage

Imam Ja' far al-Sadiq went on to tell Abu Hamza that he should put his cheek against :the tomb and say

May God bless you, O Abu al-Hasan (three times). I would sacrifice my father and my mother, I have come to you as a pilgrim, journeying to you and seeking refuge with you from the evil which I have inflicted upon myself and which I gathered up on my back. I ask God Who is Your authority (wali) and mine that He make my destiny be (through my ziyara to you, freedom from the burden of Hell-fire.(١

Perhaps Imam Jafar al-Sadiq's direction to put one's cheek on the grave is an allusion to what Imam al-Husayn did when he stood over the dead body of his son and put his cheek against his, saying, 'After you there is nothing left in the world .... What has made them so bold against God to commit sacrilege against the



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.Ibid., ١٣٩-١۴٠ -١

'?Apostle

The action of putting one's cheek against the grave is an expression of the emotions of love, sadness and devotion. The pilgrim finishes the prayer of his ziyara by praying .to God that He forgives him his sins and frees him from the punishment of Hell-fire

### 'The ziyara of the Martyrs of Karbala .٣

i

The martyrs of the revolution of al-Husayn at Karbala' have a very strong presence in popular consciousness. Their hearts encompass the emotions of love, wonder and sanctity which arise out of their attitude and devotion at Karbala.(١)

The scope for any discussion of these pious men, may God be pleased with them, is broad and extensive. Their lives, which they directed towards their struggle is full of lessons and morals for every generation which aspires to take any part in the noble .search for peaceful social change

It is not one of the purposes of this brief section to include studies of their numbers, accounts of all their lives and details of the participation of each of them at Karbala '. We have devoted a book to these studies, as already indicated.(٢) We only intend here to show their existence and presence in popular consciousness as reflected in the prayers of ziyara in which they are addressed by the pilgrim as has been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family, together with an indication of their existence in .popular consciousness as reflected in poetry and the rites of remembrance

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The martyrs of the revolution of al-Husayn expressed their high degree of awareness in the



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١ - We have published a book about them which we mentioned earlier in this book.

Ansar al-Husayn Dirasa ‘an Shuhada’ Thawrat al Husayn: al-Rijal wa al-Dalala, .((Beirut, ١٩٧٥

.Cf. note ٦٨ above -٢

revolution until the end which they knew would be martyrdom. They refused to take advantage of al-Husayn's offer to them that they should leave him and that each one should try to save his own life. This was when he gathered them together on the .evening of ۱۰th Muharram and spoke to them

Among the things he said to them was: '. . . Indeed I think that tomorrow will be the day when we meet these enemies. I have already given you permission to go. Therefore you are all released s you in darkness. Take advantage of it to ride away. Let each of you take the hand of a member of my Holy Family. Then God give you all a good reward. Scatter to your lands and towns. These people are not pursuing you. If '.they could strike me down, they would not bother to pursue anyone else

Muslim ibn 'Awsaja spoke: 'Are we to leave you? How would we excuse ourselves to God for not carrying out our duty towards you? By God, I will not leave you until I lunge my spear into their breast, until I strike them with my sword for as long as its hilt remains in my hand. If I no longer have any weapon to fight with, I will hurl stones '.against them until I die with you

Then Sa'id ibn 'Abd Allah al-Hanafi spoke: 'We will not leave you so that God may know that we have remained loyal to the absent Apostle

of God through you. By God, if I knew that I would be killed, then brought back to life, then burnt alive, then scattered in the wind, and that was done to me seventy times, I would not leave you until I meet my death in defence of you. How, then, could I not do '.so when death only comes once? It will be an honour which will have no end

Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn, next, spoke: 'By God, I want to be killed, then brought back again so that I may be killed in that way a thousand times. Indeed God, the Mighty and High, will guard my soul and the soul of these young men from the Holy Family through that (death.'(۱

.The rest of his followers spoke similar sentiments

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In the same way they refused to let any of the Holy Family go into battle before them. .They went forward towards the Umayyad army until they were all killed

Al-Husayn spoke words of praise when they were killed, some of which have been preserved by the narrators. These words express his esteem and love for them. An example is the words he spoke over the dead body of Muslim ibn 'Awsaja: 'May God have mercy on you, O Ibn 'Awsaja. Of them are some who have fulfilled their pledge (met their death) and of them are some who still wait but have not changed their (mind.'(۲

He addressed al-Hurr when he had been killed: 'You are a free man (hurr), al-Hurr



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۱- Al-Tabari, op. cit., V, ۴۱۹ff; al-Ya'qubi, op. cit., II, ۲۳۱; al-Khawarizmi op. cit., I, ۲۴۷.
۲- Al-Tabari, op. cit., V, ۴۳۵. The allusion is to Qur 'an, ۳۳:۲۳.

just like your mother named you. You are free in this world and in the Hereafter.' To the corpse of Zuhayr ibn al- Qayn, he said: 'God will not destroy you, Zuhayr. May He curse your killers and may He curse those who turned themselves into baboons and '.pigs

Al-Husayn had said of them: '. . . I do not know of followers more faithful than my followers, nor a family more pious and generous than my family.'(۱)

ii

Lamentation poetry also alludes to the followers of al-Husayn, commending them and praising their attitude and devotion. Only a few of the names of the martyrs are mentioned in lamentation poetry, and then it is some of the famous among them who are mentioned, men like al-Hurr ibn Yazid al-Riyahi, Muslim ibn 'Awsaja and Zuhayr ibn al-Qayn. However, we have not come across any poetry which has been specially .composed about them

The same is the case with regard to the rites of remembrance. The rites of rememberance for al-Husayn do mention them when the appropriate subject requires it. Sometimes some of the famous ones among them are mentioned by name when the subject requires the reporting of an incident in which one of them was .involved

Lamentation poetry and the rites of remembrances are only incidentally concerned with them, and it does not happen that they are made an independent topic, by itself, in lamentation poetry and the rites of remembrance. As we have observed in our book, Ansar al-Husayn (the Supporters of al-Husayn),(۲)



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۱- Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, al Irshad, op. cit., ۲۳۱.

۲- Cf. Ansar al-Husayn, op. cit.

they have not been given the attention which they deserve by narrators, researchers .and authors

There we commented: 'Perhaps the glorious radiance which emanates from the personality of Imam al-Husayn, and the great shadow which this great personality leaves on the spirit of the researcher, has been responsible to some extent for the neglect of historians and Traditionists in providing us with the basic material for a (better study.'(١

Here we might add that perhaps it may be the glorious radiance, which emanates from the personality of Imam al-Husayn, and the great shadow, which this great personality leaves on the spirit of the poet and the preacher at rites of remembrance, has been responsible for the deficiency which has occurred with regard to these martyrs in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn and the rites of remembrance for .al-Husayn

We consider that the poets of lament would find a rich spring of images, emotions and feelings as well as struggles full of human ideals in the lives of these martyrs. In the same way the preachers at the rites of remembrance would find, in their lives, material of great value for education and direction which would make the rites of .remembrance richer and more engrossing

It would seem that there would be the possibility, at the end of the second stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, of making the followers of al-Husayn an independent topic in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. We already find the first beginnings of this



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Ibid, ١١ -١

tendency from al-Shaykh Fakhr al-Din in his book, al-Muntakhab, in a number of the accounts of gatherings (majalis) in that book.(١) Yet it still seems to be a tendency which has not established any permanence.

We have drawn attention to this problem so that it may be given the regard which it deserves from all those who are concerned in reciting poetry for al-Husayn and in the rites of remembrance so that they should develop in the best and most beneficial way, both in form and content. We will return to dealing with this problem in the chapter about the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

iii

Although the martyrs of Karbala ' have been deprived of their right to be honoured and extolled in the poetry of lament for al-Husayn and in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, although the Shi'ite individual has been deprived of deriving full benefit from their lives in those two fields, the matter is different in the ziyara, insofar as none of the pilgrimages to al-Husayn, whether of a general or particular nature, is likely to be without a prayer of ziyara to them, which will be full of expressions of honour and love, drawing attention to their role in the service of Islam by their struggle and self-sacrifice.

The following is one of the prayers of a ziyara which has been reported about them.

Peace be with you, O men associated with God. You are our predecessors and fore-runners, and we are your followers and supporters. I testify



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١- Al-Turayhi, al-Muntakhab, ٣۶, ٧۶, ١٠٠, ۴١۵.

that you are the supporters of God, as God has said in His Book: How many a prophet has fought, with whom were men worshippers of the Lord and they were not weak because of what they had been struck by for the sake of God and they were not humiliated.(۱)

You have not been feeble, you have not been weak and you did not surrender until you met God on the path of truth and in support of the complete words of God. May God bless your souls and your bodies and grant them peace.

In the form of the call for peace, the prayer of the ziyara, attention is drawn to the quality of rabbaniyya. This word means 'a relationship with the God at a high level' which makes the life of a man who worships the Lord (rabbani) an act which is dedicated to God insofar as personal desires are united with responsibilities imposed by the Divinely inspired way of life and morality. There can be nothing opposed to these responsibilities.

Thus the quality in man of being associated with God entails 'loving through God and hating through God.'

Then the pilgrim expresses the idea that is associated with them, has embraced underlying principle and is following their path. He considers himself to be their follower and supporter, and he regards them as predecessors and fore-runners. There is one continuous path, a single path joined by links. They are an earlier link in it and the pilgrim is a link



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۱- Qur 'an, ۳:۱۴۶.

following them along this path. In this way the pilgrim expresses his commitment in principle to the revolution of al-Husayn.

The pilgrim goes on to testify that they are defiant, strong and noble supporters of God. They are like the devoted supporters of prophets, who fight with their supporters in the cause of God.

Rejoice at the promise of God, which will not be altered, for God does not alter His promises. God will attain the vengeance for you which He promised you. You are masters of the martyrs in this world and the Hereafter. You are the one who went first, the emigrants (muhajirin) and the supporters (ansar).

I testify that you fought for the sake of God. You were killed fighting for the policies of the Apostle of God and the son of the Apostle of God. Praise be to God, Who has kept Faithful to His promise to you and shown you what you love.(١)

In this passage of the pilgrim's prayer of the ziyara, he expresses this deep-rooted hope that the lofty aims, for the sake of which the supporters of al-Husayn fought, will be achieved because that is God's promise and He does not alter His promise. For this reason, the pilgrim does not despair because the followers of al-Husayn were martyred without achieving their aims during their lives.

After this, the pilgrim describes them with Qur'anic expressions which were revealed concerning a select band of believers. They are those who went first to the faith, they were emigrants to



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١- Ibn Qawlawayh, op. cit., ٢٠۴.

.God and they were supporters of the religion of God

They were those who went first in terms of all the bravery involved in the quality of being first. It is a bravery which enables the one who has such a quality to go beyond the stagnant imitative attitudes of the people of his time and to realise his dreams of .the future in a movement of defiance which has taken over his life

It does, however, provide an ideal model and example for future generations. Thereby great honour is achieved. In this respect, the followers of al-Husayn are those who went first, who went beyond the attitudes of their generation and the cowardly norms of their society in a movement of defiance in which they have cut a .path for future generations

They were the emigrants (muhajirin) in terms of all that the emigration (hijra) implies of leaving the usual, the familiar, the comfortable and the guaranteed for the unusual, hardship and danger for the sake of others, not for the sake of themselves. .Emigration (hijra) goes beyond the self to others for the sake of God

They were supporters (ansar) in terms of all that support implies of altruism, .cooperation and enduring dangers for the sake of God

The pilgrim brings this part of the prayer of ziyara to an end and giving testimony which springs from these qualities: they fought for the sake of God and they were .killed defending the policies of the Apostle of God and Imam al-Husayn

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Texts have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family about the words of farewell to the martyrs when the pilgrim finishes his pilgrimage to al-Husayn. Among .them is the following

O God, do not make this my last pilgrimage to them. Rather make me close to them and bring me into the righteousness which you gave to them through their support for the son of Your Prophet and Your proof (hujja) to Your creatures and through their .struggle alongside him for Your sake

O God, unite us and them in Your Paradise with the righteous men, and may they be .good companions

I commend you to God's protection and I recite my prayer for peace to be with you. O God, grant me the chance of coming to them again. Gather me with them on the Last (day, O Most Merciful of those who are merciful.(۱

These words of farewell throb with hope of what may come from God, with love for the martyrs and with the wish for God to allow the pilgrim to express his close ties of .love by coming again to these martyrs, may God be pleased with them all

## Lamentation Poetry

### point

The effects of the revolution of al-Husayn began to appear through the poetry of lamentation for the martyrs of the revolution and in the poetry of regret and repentance by those who had stayed away from giving support to the revolution or .had actually participated in fighting against it

The relative paucity of such poetic references in



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Ibid, ۲۰۹ -۱

the first period after the revolution is due to the fear of persecution by the Umayyads who launched a wide-scale campaign to keep the effects of the revolution within narrow confines. This was after they discovered the danger from the reactions which .the revolution had unleashed

The outbreak of the rebellion in the Hijaz against the Umayyad regime, its extension to Iraq and elsewhere, and the outburst of acts of vengeance against the Umayyads and their supporters, at the end of the Umayyad era and the beginning of the 'Abbasid state, released a flood of poetry of lamentation for the revolutionaries of Karbala', .which has continued to pour out right up to the present time

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One of the richest fields of Arabic poetry is the poetry of lamentation when we observe the vast amount of poetry composed in lament for al-Husayn, in particular and for the revolution of al-Husayn at Karbala', in general. It is clear that the poetry composed in lament for al-Husayn and his followers and the event of Karbala ', generally, is much greater and more natural than that on any other single subject. This is not confined to classical Arabic, for the colloquials of Iraq and the Gulf possess .a vast inheritance of this lamentation poetry about al-Husayn and his revolution

Persian poetry about this event is like Arabic literature but, perhaps, there is even more of it, for it contains very many works of lamentation and praise for al-Husayn and his revolution in a variety of

.styles

Indeed Shi'ite Muslims have composed poetic works on this subject in any language they speak-Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu and others. These works are vaster than their compositions in other fields.(۱) The phenomenon of poetry of lament for al-Husayn in Shi'ite literature did not only arise as a result of the tragedy of al-Husayn having an emotional appeal. In addition to that it also had a religious aim which was to .preserve for ever in poetry an act of piety

.In what follows, we will study this phenomenon from several aspects

## I. The Doctrinal Background To The Literature Of Lamentation For Al-Husayn As A Manifestation Of The Revolution Of Al-Husayn In Popular Consciousness

It is reported that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said: 'No poet recites a line of poetry about us (without the support of the Holy Spirit.'(۲

:He also said

God has built a house (bayt) in Heaven for whoever recites a line (bayt) of poetry' '.about us

,Abu Harun al-Makfuf reported: Abu 'Abd Allah (i.e. Imam Jafar al-Sadiq) said to me

(Abu Harun recite to me about al-Husayn.'(۳'

,I recited and he wept. Then he said

'.Recite as you were reciting'

(He meant with emotion.(۴

:So I recited

.Pass the grave of al-Husayn and speak of his great purity

He wept and then asked me to give him more. I recited another ode. He wept and I'

heard weeping behind the curtain. When I had finished, he said to me: 'Abu Harun, whoever recites poetry about al-Husayn and weeps making ten others weep, Heaven is decreed for him. Whoever recites poetry about al-Husayn and he weeps and he makes one other weep, Heaven is decreed for them both....'(۵)

Abu 'Umara al-Munshid reported that Imam Jafar

p: ۱۲۶

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۱ - One poet, Shaykh Ahmad al-Biladi, one of the poets of the twelfth century of the hijra, composed a thousand odes in lamentation of al-Husayn which he put into two large volumes, cf. al-Amini in his Encyclopaedia. Shaykh Khali'i Jamal al-Din ibn 'Abd al-Aziz, one of the poets of the ninth century of the hijra, has a collection of poetry about Imam al-Husayn. I have come across the collection of Shaykh Hasan al-Datistani, one of the poets of the thirteenth century of the hijra, all of which is about the Battle of Karbala'. Shaykh Muhammad al-Shubaki, a poet of the twelfth century of the hijra, has a collection of poems in praise of the Prophet and his family and another in lament for them, which he named the Flood of Tears (Sayl al-' Ibarat) It contains fifty odes. I have an anthology (al-Muntakhab) by Muhi al-Din al-Turayhi, who died in the twelfth century of the hijra. In this book there are dozens of odes whose authors are unknown. Similarly there are hundreds of works about the martyrdom which tell the story of al-Husayn and provide poetic quotations which were composed to lament for him. There are collections of manuscripts in public and private collections in which there are hundreds of odes about al-Husayn, whose authors are unknown. Cf. Adab al-Taff, I, ۱۸.

۲ - - Shaykh al-Saduq, Muhammad b. 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh Abu Jafar al-Qummi, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (Qumm, ۱۳۷۷), I, ۷.

۳- Ibid.

۴ - It appears the rites of remembrance or al-Husayn had already reached an advanced stage at the time of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq insofar as he named a special style of recitation.

۵- ۶-۱۰۴ ,Ibn Qawlawayh, op. cit.

,al-Sadiq asked him

'.Recite to me the verses of al-'Abdi about al-Husayn'

He recited to him and he wept. Then he recited to him and he wept. Then he recited to him and he wept. By God, he continued to recite to him with weeping until he heard :weeping from the house. He said

Abu 'Umara, whoever recites poetry about al-Husayn and makes fifty others weep,' will have Heaven as a reward. Whoever recites poetry about al-Husayn and makes forty others weep will have Heaven as a reward. Whoever recites poetry about al-Husayn and makes thirty others weep will have Heaven as a reward ...(۱)

:Al-Harith al-A'war reported that 'Ali said

By my father and my mother, al-Husayn will be killed on the outskirts of Kufa. By God,' it is as if I am looking at wild animals of all kinds stretching their necks towards his grave weeping and lamenting for him throughout the night until morning. If that is the case, beware of being estranged from him.'(۲)

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq told Sufyan ibn Mus'ab to recite to him about al-Husayn. He told .Umm Farwa and his family to come near. When they were present Sufyan recited

. . . Umm Farwa, weep much with flowing tears

Umm Farwa shrieked with grief and the women shrieked. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq called for the door to be shut while people of Medina were gathering outside. He sent a message out to explain to them that a boy had fainted and that was the reason for the women screaming.(۳)

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۱- Ibid.

۲- Ibid, ۷۹-۸۰.

۳- Al-Kulayni, Rawdat al-Kafi, Tradition no. ۲۶۳.

Imams of the Holy Family honoured the poets who composed this kind of poetry in lamentation and praise of the Holy Family and of al-Husayn, in particular.

An example of that is the words of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir to al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadi when the latter had recited an ode to him about his love for the Hashimites as the noblest of men. Imam al-Baqir said, 'You will continue to be supported by the Holy Spirit as long as you defend us, the members of the Holy Family.'(١)

During the days of tashriq immediately after the great pilgrimage (hajj), al-Kumayt asked for permission to visit Imam al-Sadiq and wanted to recite an ode to him. It troubled the Imam that they should be reminding themselves of poetry during the great days of the pilgrimage. However, when al-Kumayt said that it was about the Holy Family, the Imam was satisfied. He called some of his family and brought them near.

Then al-Kumayt began to recite and the tears flowed. When he reached the words about the archers firing on al-Husayn, Imam al-Sadiq raised his hands and said, 'O God, forgive al-Kumayt for his past and future offenses, whether secret or public, and give him what will please him.'

The poetry which the Sh'ia recite in lamentation for al-Husayn and the Holy Family is not, in the majority of cases, poetry for special occasions. Rather it is an activity which emotion and religion brings forth.

Emotion brings it forth through the close relationship between the Shi'ite



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١- Al-Kashshi, al-Rijal, ١٨١

.individual and his Imam who led a revolution and was wickedly oppressed

Religion brings it forth as represented in some of the texts which we mentioned which urge the recitation of poetry about the Holy Family and which awaken a desire for it. It is also represented in the personal attitudes which the Imams of the Holy Family adopted towards the poets who wrote about al-Husayn. We have already dealt with .some of this earlier

For this reason and that, the composing and recitation of poetry became a religious act which entered into the glorification of the rites of God. Al-Husayn had not striven for personal glory through his revolution. He had undertaken it to serve the people on the basis of the guidance of Islam. Therefore, to make the revolution live on in his person and to spread its slogans and influence in society through poetry and other things is an act of piety. Whoever exalts the rites of God that will come from the piety (of the heart.(١

The poets themselves have expressed this religious vision of their poetic works in lamentation of al-Husayn as a result of the direction of the Imams of the Holy Family. Among the earliest poetic texts which reflect the religious vision of the poetry of lament for al-Husayn are the words of Abu al-Aswad al-Du 'ali Zalim ibn 'Amr (d. ۶۹ at the age of ۸۵) in his ode in which he laments al-Husayn and those of the Hashimites .who were killed with him

There



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.Qur'an, ۲۲:۳۲ -۱

he wishes that he could have been a shield to protect them and thereby he would have gained eternal reward from God.(١)

Another example is the words of Abu Muhammad Sufyan ibn Mus' ab al-'Abdi al-Kufi (d.c. ١٢٠ in Kufa) from his ode about the Holy Family. He addresses 'Ali as a leader who drove armies away from the rich soil. The poet himself tells how he has fought for 'Ali with ideas and words, using poetry and orations as weapons.

If 'Ali is pleased with him, he does not care about any who are displeased with him. All he wants is to be accepted as his companion through love of him and piety. With such friends his soul will find comfort from fatigue.(٢)

Al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadi (d. ١٢۶) spoke to Imam al-Baqir after reciting one of his odes to him and the Imam offered him money which he would not accept, 'By God, I have not said anything about you for which I want to be given a worldly reward. I will not accept anything as compensation for it because it belongs to God and His Apostle.'

Then the Imam replied:

'You will have what the Apostle of God mentioned: You will continue to be supported by the Holy Spirit as long as you defend us, the members of the Holy Family.'

Al-Kumayt said in his Hashimiyyat that it was through the love of the Holy Family that he approached God when he was in distress.

Another example of that kind is the verses



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١- Jawad Shubbar, Adab al-Taff, (Beirut, ١٩۶٩),I, ١٠١.

٢- Ibid., I,١٧٩-١٨٠.

of al-Sayyid al-Himyari, Isma'il ibn Muhammad (d. ۱۸۳ or ۱۸۷ in Baghdad). He declares that he has made the family of the Apostle a means by which he hoped to attain salvation from destruction. How could he be blamed for loving those whom he had ?made the method for him to attain Heaven

Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, the founder of the school of law, (d. ۲۰۴ in Egypt) composed an ode in lament for al-Husayn. In it, he said that, if he had committed a fault in loving the family of Muhammad, it was a fault from which he would not repent, for they would be his intercessors on the Day of Resurrection when important .decisions were made plain to the onlookers

Di'bil al-Khuza'i (d. ۲۴۶) asked in one of his famous poems how a man could blame the family of the Prophet, for they were always his beloved friends and the family of his trust. He had chosen them to be good to himself because they were the best of the best men. He called on God to increase his love for them and to increase their love for .his good deeds. He sought Paradise from God through love of them

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With these examples, we have given sufficient evidence of the religious background of the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn. A researcher would find manifestations of this religious background in the poets of lamentation for al-Husayn in all periods from the first century of the hijra until today. We will

observe that the religious background of the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn is at .its strongest in the late periods

### II. The Hostile Attitude of the Authorities

We have seen how the Imams of the Holy Family explained the high rank with God and the promised reward in Heaven for those who composed poetry of lamentation .for al-Husayn and the Holy Family

We have also seen how they used to honour their poets, call upon them and shower them with love and concern. Further, we have seen how this attitude gave this poetry of lamentation a religious incentive alongside its emotional incentive. These two factors made the poets of the Sh'ia and others increase and diversify this quality in .their poetry

Here we must be mindful of an extremely important matter connected with the great reward from God reported by the Holy Family -some of which has already been mentioned- for those who compose or recite any poetry about the Holy Family. The modern reader may be surprised and ask himself whether such a simple action deserves the great rewards which are reported in the texts from the Imams of the .Holy Family

In answer we would say that this high rank, which the poet or the reciter of poetry about al-Husayn receives, is not absolute. It arises out of the nature of the conditions .which prevailed at that time

Poetry in praise or lamentation of the Imams of the Holy Family and especially of al-Husayn, speaking about the injustice done to them and denouncing their oppressors .

. .

all this encompassed a political attitude which rejected the existing authority. It also meant a political attitude which supported the Holy Family and their political and legislative program. As literary history demonstrates, the poets were constantly .under observation by the political authorities of the time

For a poet or writer to reveal his support for the Imams of the Holy Family through poetry or a book was liable to lead to his death at the hands of the men in power, or to expulsion and banishment, or to imprisonment and seizure. This was due to the fact that in the past an attitude expressed in poetry did not merely mean an intellectual .and emotional attitude; it also meant a political attitude

It then becomes clear that work of this size and importance appropriately provides its author with the high status which the text reported concerning this matter speak of .and entitles him to great honour and praise from the Imams of the Holy Family

In the rest of this section, we will see a picture of the hostile attitude of the authorities .which violently punished every poet who answered the call of the Holy Family

When the composition and recitation of poetry and the writing and publishing of books about the Holy Family, and especially about al-Husayn, became a cultural activity, which did not expose the author to any danger or cause him any hardship from the authorities, it was still a noble and blessed activity and the author was still sure

of a reward from God. However, it certainly did not attain the level of merit and nobility of the heroic poets who sang of the revolution and tragedy of the Holy Family in those harsh circumstances; for by that they exposed themselves, their families and their children to the most terrible dangers.

Through their poetry, they attained their absolute commitment to the cause of the individual Muslim to the extent that the circumstance and means allowed them at that time. In what follows we will give a picture of the suffering of these men who were entitled, as the heroes they were, to praise and honour.

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Throughout the different political epochs, during the Umayyad period, then the 'Abbasid period and what followed it, the ruling authorities realized the danger of this kind of poetry. It enflamed religious zeal and strengthened the doctrinal and emotional relationship with the opposition; it raised doubts about the legitimacy of the existing government.

As a result of this realization, the authorities persecuted the poets of the Holy Family. Because of this the poetry of lamentation used to circulate secretly among the Shi'a; and the poets would keep it hidden from the authorities and be anxious that they should not get to know of any of this poetry, for if they knew of any of it, they would pursue them.

Here we refer to the reply of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq to the people of Medina who came to inquire after hearing the sound of weeping. He

kept the real reason hidden from them and told them that a boy in the house had fainted. In all probability Imam al-Sadiq's behaviour was as a result of his desire to keep Sufyan ibn Mus'ab's reputation as the author of the ode unknown and to protect .him from the oppression of the authorities

Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani has reported: 'A group of later poets, whom I will not mention here as I do not want to be unduly long, all composed poems of lamentation for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali. None of the poems of lamentation of the poets of the earlier period have come to us. These poets did not make that public out of fear of the Umayyads. '(۱)

This quotation demonstrates that composing poetry of lament for al-Husayn was a prohibited activity which was punished. Later there was some relaxation. We should not forget that Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani wrote his book, Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, during the Buwayhid period, after the 'Abbasids had become weak and the Sh'ia had gained .some ability to express their beliefs publicly

Ibn al-Athir reported in his history the ode of A'sha Hamdan in which he lamented the Penitents (Tawwabun). He described how they marched in a state which sought piety and which was repentant for what had happened to al-Husayn through their desertion of him. Then they met the army who came against them at the Battle of'Ayn al-Warda and fought with sharp swords. Then Ibn al-Athir added concerning the poem: 'It was one of the things which



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.Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani, Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, ۱۲۲ -۱

(was kept hidden at that time.'(1)

In the Dictionary of Poets (Mu'jam al-Shu'ara) of al-Marzubani, it is reported that 'Awf ibn 'AbdAllah al-Azdi wrote a long ode in which he lamented al-Husayn. 'This poem of lamentation was kept hidden during the time of the 'Abbasids and only emerged after '.that

.It included a derogatory verse about Mu'awiya

Al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadi was almost killed when Hisham Ibn 'Abd al-Malik heard his poems called the Hashimiyyat. He only escaped death through a trick by which he .was able to flee from prison

He has explained in his poetry the hostility and censure he faced as a result of the attitude which he expressed publicly in his poetry. He said that he hated the Umayyads and was hated by them. While he found fault with them, they blamed him. The ignorant members of his tribe blamed him for loving the Holy Family but not to .love such noble people was shameful and disastrous

His relatives hated him for loving the Holy Family and those who were not so close as his relatives gave him troubles so that he suffered. People pointed at him and hoped that he would fail but they, in fact, were the ones who were failing. Some even called him an unbeliever for loving the Holy Family, while others accused him of sinfulness for doing it. As a result of loving the family of Muhammad, he was in constant fear wherever he went. He asked what his crime was and his conduct that



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.Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, ۱۸۶-۹ -۱

.he should be treated in such a way

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When Harun al-Rashid heard of the ode of Mansur al-Numayri in lament for al-Husayn and praise of the Holy Family, he became very angry and ordered Abu 'Isma, one of his generals, to go immediately to al-Raqqa. He ordered him to apprehend .Mansur al-Numayri, cut his tongue out, kill him and send his head to him

When Abu 'Isma arrived at the gates of al-Raqqa, he saw the funeral cortege of al-Numayri coming out of it. He went back to al-Rashid and told him of al-Numayri s death. Al-Rashid remarked: 'If I had found him dead, I would have burnt him in the '.fire

Di'bil al-Khuza'i explained his fear in one of his famous poems. He says that he hid his love for the Holy Family because of the obstinate opposition to the people of truth. Although he was frightened in this life with its struggles, he hoped for safety after .death

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In the literature of lamentation for al-Husayn, there has arisen an element known as .the poetry of the Jinn in lamentation for al-Husayn

In his book, Kamil al-Ziyara, Ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummi devoted a chapter to this subject which he entitled: 'The Wailing of the Jinn for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali. In it, he gives examples of this poetry. These are characterized by being short utterances which are usually weak and trivial. Many of them have been attributed to historical figures, like .the well-known rajaz verse of al-Tirimmah al-Ta'i

O my Camel, do

.not fear my urging . . . etc

In much the same manner there have been other verses attributed to Jinn in many of the books of history and literature. It seems to us that most of this poetry is by unknown human poets who wanted to spread propaganda on behalf of the revolution and who wanted to take part in one of the cherished acts of piety without endangering themselves and exposing themselves to the punishment of the .authorities

Therefore they composed these verses and attributed them to the Jinn. Perhaps some of this poetry was the work of the women who used to devote themselves to exclamations of grief at the women's rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, they might have wanted to create wonder and amazement by attributing their exclamations of grief to creatures who were not human. This would fit in with the popular mentality .which craves for such things

Whatever the case may be, this phenomenon clearly indicates the atmosphere of fear and caution which prevailed in literary circles and among the ordinary people when they approached the subject of composing or reciting laments for al-Husayn and the .Holy Family

However, this hostile attitude, which successive governments adopted towards the subject of lamentation for al-Husayn, did not affect the growth of such poetry. It may even have increased its growth and fervour. The poets of the Sh'ia began to carry it .out in a spirit of self-sacrifice and piety

The hostile attitude of the authorities towards this lamentation made

these authorities become, in popular consciousness, partners in the Umayyad pattern: it made them become, in popular consciousness, participants with the .Umayyads in the persecution of al-Husayn

## III. Poetic Content And Man S Psychological Disposition

### point

The poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn gives a picture of the psychological .disposition of the Shi'ite, in particular, and the Muslim, in general

The poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn is sad without being submissive and defeatist in the face of the cruelty and challenges of the existing situation. That it should be and is something which is generally natural and acceptable in the genre of lamentation poetry. How could it be otherwise, when it springs from a true emotion of love and real anguish in the heart, as is the case in the poetry of lamentation for al-?Husayn

How could it be otherwise, when, in addition to the emotional motive, it springs from a religious motive, as is the case in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn? However, the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn is not only this. There is also a spirit of glory and a spirit of vengeance in it. It is full of ideas of power and threatening against those who participated, in one way or another, in the atrocity of Karbala': the Umayyad .regime and its supporters

The poet who writes of al-Husayn expresses, in his poetry, his readiness to struggle and sacrifice to gain vengeance against the criminals who committed the crime of .' killing al-Husayn, his family and his followers at Karbala

In the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn, which

has comedown to us from the first and second centuries of the hijra, one will find .many examples which are full of these ideas

In what follows, we will examine some of the examples of the kind of poetry of .lamentation for al-Husayn

### The Umayyad Period

Among these poets was 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Hurr al-Ju'fi. He was one of the outstanding leaders in Kufa and had refused to help al- Husayn when the latter had asked him to. Then he regretted his action and lamented al-Husayn and his followers .in a poem in which he shows his grief, his regret and his desire for vengeance

Later he proclaimed his rebellion against the Umayyad regime as represented by ' Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad. He gathered his followers around him and went to Karbala'. He looked at the places where al-Husayn and those with him had been killed. Then he .went on to al-Mada'in. There he recited a poem

In this poem he blamed himself for his failure to support the son of the daughter of the Prophet, This failure filled him with a grief that would not leave him, He remembered standing at the graves of those who had been killed and prayed to God .for them

He described them as heroes and the best and bravest of them. Then he promised vengeance on their behalf. Thus, this poem of lament expresses the profound grief .and regret in his heart and gives the threat of vengeance

Ubayd Allah ibn al-Hurr al-Ju'fi was killed in ۶۸ after a battle'

in which he fought against ' Ubayd Allah ibn al-'Abbas al-Sulami, one of the generals .of Mus 'ab ibn al-Zubayr in Kufa

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Sulayman b. Qatta al-'Adawi al-Taymi composed a poem when he passed Karbala ' three years after al-Husayn had been killed. He described how he passed by the graves of members of Mohammed's family. The sun had become sick and the land had shaken at the killing of al-Husayn, He describes the treachery of the tribes of Qays and Ghani in killing al-Husayn and promises them vengeance to come for the shedding of such blood. The dead body of al-Husayn on the banks of the Euphrates .brings shame and disgrace to Muslims. The sky and the stars wept at his death

In these verses there is a portrayal of real grief and the threat and promise of vengeance. However, the threat is not made specifically at the Umayyad regime but at the tribes of Qays and Gham. Yet we could consider his threat against the tribe of Qays to be a threat against the whole regime in view of the fact that members of the .'tribe of Qays made up the vast majority of the Umayyad army at Karbala

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Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali, Zalim ibn 'Amr (d. ۶۹) composed a poem in which he described the one who brought news of al-Husayn's death as the conveyor of tidings of the death of religion and piety. He declared that harsh men of Nizar killed the sons of 'Ali on

.the banks of the Euphrates

He called upon men to follow the truth and defend al-Husayn and his family from the tyrannical hypocrites. They are the best of men in the eyes of God. Men should be .guided by them and it is ungrateful to God to reject their guidance

Although this poem is without fervent emotion, it nonetheless, reinforces the religious .idea of the Holy Family and its call for vengeance

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Al-Fadl ibn al-'Abbas ibn ' Utba ibn Abi Lahab ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim composed a poem in which he described how he wept for the death of the noblest man. Again he blamed the tribesmen for killing Husayn and his followers. He said that .in every tribe there flowed the blood of the family of Hashim

Their life and death belonged to God and God would be the judge of their goodness on the Day of Resurrection. Every life that is lost has a wali who is entitled to vengeance, and the wall for the blood shed at Karbala' was approaching. He was the one who would rise over the murderers and conquer them. When the two parties met before God, the enemies of the Hashimites would see which party belonged to the pure .Prophet

.The threat of vengeance in this poem is clearly stated

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Al-Fadl ibn al-'Abbas b. Rabi'a ibn al-Harith ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib composed a poem in which he gave a broad wide-sweeping picture and showed the ancient struggle which existed from the time of

the Apostle of God. He showed the sufferings of the 'Alids from the earliest times: how they were killed and imprisoned; how their rights were ignored and no attention was .paid to God's injunction about the Prophet's next of kin

However, the Prophet belonged to the family which the 'Alids belonged to and their enemies would be punished. When they had been summoned to guidance, they turned away from it. They rejoiced that they had killed the believers from the family of Hashim and their supporters. Justice would come to them at the hands of .revolutionary tribesmen

Then the poet mentioned some of the supporters of the 'Alids who were killed in the early wars of Islam and those at the battle of Siffin who had died as martyrs fighting for Imam 'Ali, men like Dhu al-Shahadatayn (Khuzayma ibn Thabit) and 'Ammar b. .Yasir

He went on to mention other 'Alid supporters who became martyrs when Ziyad was governor of Kufa, men like Rashid al-Hujari and Mitham al-Tammar. Then he turned to revolutionaris who were martyred at Karbala' with al-Husayn, men like Zuhayr and .'Uthman ibn 'Ali

He demanded that these men be restored to life and threatened vengeance against those who had killed them. In particular, he pointed to the possibility of vengeance coming from Yemen where there were men whose fathers had been loyal supporters .of religion and Imam 'Ali

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Awf ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-Ahmar al-Azdi, one of the Penitents (tawwabun) who' revolted against the Umayyads

under the leadership of Sulayman b. Surad al-Khuzai's to demand vengeance for al-Husayn, composed a poem of lamentation. It appears that the poem may have been .composed during the revolt

In the poem he called for al-Husayn's death to be proclaimed as the death of the noblest man. It was the poor and needy, the deprived who would weep for al-Husayn. Al-Husayn was an Imam who had every right to complain about many of his followers, for he was exposed to lances and swords and betrayed on the banks of the .Euphrates

The poet urged the umma, which has become lost and gone stupidly astray, to return to God. He then declared his intention to fight against Yazid with an army and to test which of the two groups was really more cowardly. The poet called on anyone who wept for al-Husayn whenever the sun rises or darkness falls. He reviled the people who sent for al-Husayn and gave him false promises of support but were not with him .at the battle to defend him

He probably included himself among such people, for he goes on to say that he wished now that he had been there. If he had been there, he would have struck out against these hateful enemies and defended al-Husayn with his sword for as long as .he was able to

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The poet, Abu Dihbil Wahb ibn Zam'a al-Jumahi was a contemporary of Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufiyan and his son, Yazid. He used to compose poetry

of lamentation for al-Husayn and defamatory poems against the Umayyads so that he had to avoid people. He lived in the first century of the hijra.(۱)

In one of his poems, he gave a picture of his passionate concern for the dead heroes at Karbala. The nobility and integrity of those who were killed there is contrasted with the sinful extravagance of the Umayyads, with their drinking and their humiliation of chaste women.

The poet saw that Islam had been corrupted and was wandering blindly in the darkness with nobody to lead it as a sinful man was in control of affairs and was incapable of putting anything right. This corruption of Islam had been caused by those who had killed al-Husayn. These men, namely the Umayyads, had turned away from good in order to preserve their transitory power.

The poet then gave another pitiful picture of the events at Karbala' where a child was killed by arrows and children were left orphaned with no one to console them. He, then promised that he would always remember events and weep over them. Finally he promised to fight against the Umayyads and either die or defeat them.

In this ode, we find an awareness of the real situation in the Umayyad regime: luxury and oppression, deviation from Islam in accordance with passion for government and domination. There is also a sincere grief and a clear and open spirit of vengeance. It is a vengeance which is drawing near but it is not merely



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۱- Al-Sayyid, Muhsin Amin, A'yan al-Shi a, I, part II. ۱۶۳

retaliation and a cure for himself. It is only to restore justice and bring truth back to its .rightful place

* * *

In our view, this kind of poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn was the kind of lamentation poetry which prevailed during the Umayyad period, despite the assumption which has been made of the existence of other examples which do not represent the spirit of the age nor the psychological characteristics of the Shi'ite in .that age

In the 'Abbasid period the call for vengeance against the Umayyads becomes almost inaudible in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn. Its place is left to the kind of poetry of lamentation, in which there is grief and in some of which there is satisfaction .'that the 'Abbasids have avenged the martyrs of Karbala

The Umayyads used to represent the rival who had committed the crime. The Shi'ite poet gave expression to his and the Shi'ite people's desire for vengeance against them by threat, promise of punishment and incitement to vengeance. We believe that the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn which has come down to us from that period .is only a few of the examples of such poetry

Most of this kind of lamentation poetry, and particularly the most violent in impact and the most lavish in ideas of force and vengeance, has been lost and its effect forgotten because of the circumstance prevailing at that time. These were circumstances of fear of persecution and death which made the poets of the Shi'a keep this

kind of poetry secret, prevented the narrators from recording it and stopped the .people from reciting it. Thus only a little has come down to us

### The Early 'Abbasid Period .۲

The Umayyad state came to an end and its authority was inherited by another state in accordance with a new mental attitude towards understanding the task of government and in accordance with a new style in carrying government out. Thus the direct rival and his state had come to an end and another state had come into existence as a result of using the slogan, 'Vengeance for al-Husayn'. This was the .Abbasid state; they were Hashimites and descendants of the uncle of al-Husayn

The poets of the Shi'a and other poets naturally continued to compose poems of lament. However, some of the poets attempted, in their laments, to reflect the new situation which had come about through the rise of the 'Abbasid state on the ruins of .the Umayyads

Some of the poets composed odes in lamentation for al-Husayn, in which there was grief but in which there was also -as we have indicated earlier- joy and gladness at the fact that the wicked Umayyads had received their promised punishments at the .hands of the 'Abbasids

Among such poets was 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mu'tazz (۲۴۷-۲۹۶).Ibn al-Muttazz provides us with two examples of such poetry. In the first he claims that the 'Abbasids have punished the Umayyads for the wrongdoing. They have made the Umayyads taste ,the fruits of sin. If it had not been for the 'Abbasids

.the blood of al-Husayn would have flowed at no cost and to no avail

In his other ode he claims that the 'Abbasids did not just weep with tears for al-Husayn. In fact they wept with the blood which flowed from their swords which destroyed the Umayyad state. (Is this a suggestion against the Imams of the Holy Family and their Shi'a?) He goes on to assert that it was the 'Abbasids who raised the slogan of his name in battle. They let their hair fall long over their shoulder in grief and .they put on black clothes in mourning for him

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Another of these poets is al-Qasim ibn Yusuf ibn Subayh, who died at the beginning of the third century of the hijra. His brother was Ahmad b. Yusuf b. Subayh, one of the .most excellent secretaries of al-Ma'mun (d. ٢١٢). His brother al-Qasim died after him

In one of his poems, the poet lamented for al-Husayn and described the dreadful acts of the Umayyads including their recognition of Sumayya as the mother of Ziyad as a result of an illicit relationship with Abu Sufyan, and the resulting attempt to declare .Ziyad legitimate and therefore the legitimate brother of Mu'awiya

He recalled that the Umayyad might was destroyed at the battle of al-Zab. This poem is an explanation that it was the 'Abbasids, 'the ones who sought that vengeance', who achieved it. They were the ones who killed the Umayyads, they were the ones 'who 'crushed with a crushing blow

.hashamu bi-hashimatin), the Hashimites, the 'Abbasids)

Perhaps the 'Abbasids, themselves, were behind this attempt to form a tendency within lamentation poetry, which would portray them to the Shi'a as bringers of divine vengeance, so that thereby they might gain popularity with the Shi'a of the Holy Family and use that to diminish the intensity of 'Alid opposition to them. This opposition, which had emerged soon after the establishment of the 'Abbasid state, .had become very severe

This view may be supported by the fact the authors of the poem, which we have just .discussed, were both men who belonged to the 'Abbasid regime

Abd Allah ibn al-Muttazz ibn al-Mutawakkil ibn al-Mu'tasam ibn Harun al-Rashid was' an important prince in the ruling 'Abbasid family. It was in his own interest and that of his family that he should spread a poetic attitude in lamentation poetry which adopted .the idea that it was the 'Abbasids who had achieved vengeance for al-Husayn

There can be no doubt, even for a moment, that he composed the poem of lamentation for al-Husayn out of his own and his family's special interests, not out of any genuine emotion. His attitude towards the descendants of Abu Talib (Talibids), in general, and the 'Alids, in particular, was an attitude of hostility and hatred. In his collection of poems, he has an ode of forty lines in which he defames the Talibids and .the 'Alids

Al-Qasim ibn Yusuf was from a family which worked in the service of the 'Abbasids .and their regime

His brother, Ahmad ibn Yusuf Subayh (d. ٢١٢), has been described as one of the most excellent of the secretaries of al-Mamun. Our poet, al-Qasim, was put in charge of land-tax of the Sawad in Iraq. 'He collected more of it than anyone else in the time of '.al-Ma'mun

This is reported in the book, al-Awraq, of al-Suli. That quotation means, in effect, that he oppressed the people and treated them harshly, even though he improved his .position with his master, al-Ma'mun

This attempt may have been part of an overall plan to reduce the influence of the 'Alids in the Islamic mind, in general, and the mind of the Shi'a of the Holy Family, in .particular

The Imams of the Holy Family relied on several factors in the mind of the umma: that their behaviour was regarded as ideal and free from any faults and blemishes; they were the descendants of the Apostle and connected to the Imamate in a successive chain through designation; that they were oppressed by the Umayyads in terms of the fact that the Umayyads had usurped authority after the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali, insofar as Imam al-Hasan had not been able to continue in government; and that they were the source of Islamic legislation for the laws by virtue of being the .heirs of the Apostle's knowledge; and therefore were Imams of the Muslims

The 'Abbasid plan was to thwart this by trying to deprive them of these qualities. They constantly attempted to belittle the Imams

of the Holy Family. They tried, in vain, to disfigure their reputation in the eyes of the .people. Yet their behaviour was transparent and obvious to anyone

The 'Abbasids attempted to demonstrate that the Imams of the Holy Family were ignorant of the injunctions of Islamic law. They failed after having made some attempts with Imam al-Rida and Imam Muhammad al-Jawad. Thereafter they turned .to encouraging the growth of other legal tendencies

The 'Abbasids tried to deprive them of the quality of being sons of the Apostle of God in a negative way, by concentrating on the son of the daughter not being a son, and in a positive way, by concentrating on the paternal uncle being a closer relation to a .person than the son of his daughter

They did this because they were sons of al-'Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet and from that they maintained that they were more entitled to the caliphate than the Imams of the Holy Family from the line of al-Husayn and that they were more entitled than the .sons of al-Hasan to the caliphate which was inherited from the Apostle of God

The 'Abbasids attempted to deprive them of the quality of being oppressed by explaining that it was they who had taken vengeance for al-Husayn and the other Talibids who had been martyred during the time of the Umayyads. It, then, followed that the Talibids, and especially the 'Alids, had attained their objective through the vengeance which had been taken and therefore did not

.have anything further to complain about

If there was a plan like this, it failed completely and achieved absolutely none of its .aims

As far as our research is concerned, the attempt to form an attitude in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn, which adopted the idea that vengeance was achieved .through the 'Abbasids soon failed

The basic contradiction between the aspirations of the 'Alids, especially in the line of al-Husayn, and the 'Abbasids clinging on to power was liable to thwart any attempt to lessen its intensity. The 'Abbasids tried to wipe out completely their Alid opponents. They drove them out of every land and stifled their activity with a ferocity that has had no parallel. This policy led to the 'Abbasids becoming like the Umayyads in Shi'ite .consciousness. Indeed they were portrayed as even worse and more despicable

As a result, a poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn grew, which was full of the demand .for vengeance against the 'Abbasids as well as condemning the Umayyads

Among the poets of this kind of lamentation poetry is Mansur al-Numayri (d. ١٩٠ or ١٩٣). In one extract of a poem, he declared that the family of the Prophet and those who loved them were silent out of fear of being killed. The Christians and Jews were .given safety while those from the umma of Islam were in distress

Ibn Qutayba commented in his book, al-Shi'r wa-al-Shu'ara that al-Rashid recited one poem by Mansur al-Numayri after the latter had died and declared that he wanted him captured and

.burnt

In this poem the grief expressed was moderated but it painted a clear picture of the problem faced by the descendants of al-Husayn. The most serious allegation in it was that the poet considered the 'Abbasid government to be a legal continuation of the .Umayyad government which killed al-Husayn

He regarded the vengeance against the 'Abbasids as the same as the vengeance against the Umayyads because the attitude of both the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids towards the offspring of the Prophet was one and the same. He asked, 'Are you jealous that I love the sons of Muhammad?' Then he taunted them with the words, '.'Let there be dirt in the mouth of the man who is jealous

He declared that they had treated the offspring of the Prophet with harshness. Finally he threatened that there were men ready to fight with weapons on behalf of the family of the Prophet. Perhaps this was what caused Harun al-Rashid to order him to be killed when he heard his poem. However, when they reached him, he had already .died and his funeral cortege was going to the grave

Di'bil ibn 'Ali al-Khuza'i (۱۴۸-۲۴۶) composed a similar kind of poem to the one just mentioned. In it he cursed the Umayyads who were led by the devil. He then turned to .the shocking treatment they meted out to the women in al-Husayn's camp

After this he brought out the following fact, that the corrupt regime was using the people to support its members

and its government apparatus without any concern for the good of the people. The result which emerged from the people's consent to the wicked regime was that they '.had lost their personality, they had lost 'the nobility of life and that is precious

Di'bil promised the family of Muhammad that he and his people would prevail for them, in time to come, 'over the cursed people, who are grim-faced ('abus).' Thus he was promising vengeance. But vengeance against whom? Against the Umayyads? The Umayyads had disappeared, never to return, and Di'bil was born after the fall of their regime. (There may be an allusion to what Di'bil is intending in his words 'one day '.(we will prevail over a cursed people who are grim-faced ('abus

The Arabic word 'abus comes from the same root as 'Abbas and it may be used as a deliberate allusion to the 'Abbasids.) At any rate it seems clear to us that he, like his predecessor, Mansur al-Numayri, was speaking about vengeance against the legal continuation of the Umayyads as represented by the 'Abbasid regime which was no better in relation to 'the family of Muhammad' than the Umayyad regime. Indeed it .may have been worse than it on many occasions

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In another poem of lamentation, Di'bil describes how al-Husayn was cheated by men, who marched against him while saying, 'this is the leader of men.' This was the way people repaid Muhammad for bringing them divine revelation; they opposed him by .opposing his son

All the tribes were involved and partners in shedding al-Husayn's blood. They carried out killing, capturing, burning and plundering just as if they were raiding Byzantine .territory

Yet the poet said that there was a way in which the Umayyads could be excused, for their family had been among the first opponents of the Prophet and as soon as they got the opportunity they returned to their disbelief. However there could be no excuse for the 'Abbasids' treatment of the family of the Prophet. The poet turned his attention to Tus where he had been staying at the grave of the pure man. This is a .reference to Imam al-Rida who was poisoned by al-Mamun

He pointed out that there were two graves in close proximity at Tus, one was the grave of the best of men, namely Imam 'Ali Rida, and the other was the grave of the worst of men, namely the 'Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid. He contrasted the two and in a bitter verse declared that 'the abominable would not profit by being close to the '.pure nor will the pure suffer any harm by nearness to the abominable

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These poets include al-Bisami-'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Nasr ibn Mansur ibn Bisam al-Baghdadi-(d. ۳۰۲). When the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil destroyed the tomb of al-Husayn, he wrote verses in which he declared that if the Umayyads had killed the son of the daughter of the Prophet, his own relatives, the 'Abbasids had treated him in a similar way

by destroying his grave. In fact it seemed that they were sorry that they had not .taken part in killing and were trying to compensate for that by pursuing his corpse

Another of such poets was al-Qadi al-Tannukhi-Ali ibn Muhammad-(d. ۳۴۲). He wrote a refutation of the ode in which Ibn al-Muttazz had defamed the Talibids and the 'Alids. He said that Ibn al-Mu'tazz had accused them of rising up in revolt with the slogan of vengeance for Zayd (the brother of the Imam al-Baqir who was killed in a .(revolt against the Umayyads

Then he turned on him and accused the 'Abbasids of using a similar slogan. He recounted the 'Abbasids' mistreatment of the Talibids and 'Alids: the oppression by al-.Mansur and al-Ma'mun's poisoning of Imam al-Rida

Thus in popular consciousness the 'Abbasids had changed into symbols of oppression like the Umayyads because they had followed a policy of murder and persecution .against the 'Alids and their Shi'a

Al-Sharif al-Radi (۳۵۹-۴۰۶) was one of these poets. He, too, wrote comparing the attitude of the later 'Abbasid regime with that of the earlier Umayyad regime and .complaining of their treatment of the 'Alids

#### The Later 'Abbasid Period .۳

In the second half of the 'Abbasid era and the period after it, the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn changed generally into poetry of tears without any challenge, spirit of resistance or slogans of vengeance. This is not to deny the existence of some poetic works which preserve the spirit of the old school of the Umayyad era. However, these are

works which lack sincerity and reality. Their challenges are merely imaginary heroics divorced from reality.

We find many examples in the poetry of later poets like al-Sayyid Haydar al-Hilli, and others like him. This genre confirms the rule which states that whenever the situation becomes bankrupt and decayed there emerges a literature of compensation which searches for imaginary acts of heroism or re-enacts past acts of heroism which have no connection with the life which is being lived.

Perhaps some of the poetic works of al-Sharif al-Radi in this historical period are exceptions to this rule in respect to our subject. In these works, he used to point to the Fatimid state in Egypt as a representative, in some ways, of the 'Alids and, therefore, as a candidate to take revenge for them on the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids.

In one poem he reminded the Umayyads that vengeance was waiting for them in distant lands. Swords were ready and horses waiting in their stable. He was waiting for the day when the swords would strike them down. Perhaps there may be in these verses an allusion to the Mahdi.(١)

He, also, has poetry of this kind which does not speak about the immediate situation even though there are allusions in it to the circumstances which he is living through. This is represented as suppressed resistance to the 'Abbasid government under whom he was living.(٢)

His brother, al-Murtada, wrote in similar vein.(٣)

In this period, the poetry for al-Husayn changed into pure lament without any spirit



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١- Jawad Shubbar, op. cit., ١١, ٢٧٨.

٢- Ibid, II, ٢١٥.

٣- Ibid, II, ٢٧۴, ٢٧۶, ٢٨۴-۵.

of challenge and slogans of vengeance. The immediate symbols of vengeance had been destroyed with the fall of the Umayyad state and the deaths of the Umayyads (and the desecration of their graves.(۱

In addition to this there was the break up which had occurred within the 'Alid ranks. The 'Alids of the line of al-Hasan had continued the struggle against the 'Abbasids trying, in vain, to ignite the land with revolution. It had brought destruction, death and .banishment to them and those of the Shi'a who supported them

On the other hand, the Imams of the Holy Family had laid down another policy. This was to build a cultural structure for the individual Muslim and to form a cultural climate for opposition which would be based on changing the mental attitude of the popular base of the existing government through ideas. This was to be achieved by (transforming the Shi'a into an effective intellectual force in ordinary society.(۲

At this time lamentation poetry for al-Husayn, like the ziyara, still had to be considered as a cultural factor which participated with other cultural factors in consolidating the relationship of the individual with Islam as it struggled and with its .men and movements

Although as a result of the change in the political situation in this period, namely the disappearance of the Umayyads, the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn had lost the justification for one of its elements, the element of challenge and vengeance, it did neglect to mention the Umayyads just because



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۱- If we take into account a much later period than the period of the setting up ofthe 'Abbasid state, the idea of vengeance was still useful. It was a slogan which was raised in some of the wars of expansion in order to attract the allegiance and support of some sectarian groups. Timurlung had conquered Damascus under the slogan of 'Vengeance for al-Husayn from the descendants of Yazid ibn Mu' awiya', meaning by that the people of Damascus. Cf. Muhammad Ja'far al-Muhajir, Hayrat al- Lubnaniyyin .(unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of St. Joseph, Beirut), ۴۸

Perhaps the realisation by official cultural leadership in Islamic society at that time, -٢ of their general political influence over the authorities, was what made them examine every literary text carefully to find out its relationship with the intellectual attitude of the Imams of the Holy Family. In the same way as it was said that the author of a literary work was Shi'ite, it was also said of the literary work that there was 'the smell of Shi'ism' in it or that there was loathsome Shi'ism' in it, and other similar warnings. All these were intended to prevent ordinary man from coming into contact with this .intellectual tendency

they had disappeared. In the same way they have continued to be mentioned in every .age and their memory has been preserved

However it was not as an object of revenge but merely in order to curse them and denounce them, their policies and their deeds. At this stage in the development of the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn the 'Abbasids were added as a result of a change .which had entered into the psychology and circumstances of the Shi'ites

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There were two objects of enmity to the Fatimids: the Umayyads in Spain, who were their political rivals and the heirs who traced the descendants back to the Umayyads in Damascus, who had killed al-Husayn and persecuted the descendants of 'Ali; and the 'Abbasids in Baghdad, who were their political rivals in Egypt and Syria, who had pursued the policy of the Umayyad, and gone beyond it, in persecuting the .descendants of 'Ali

The poetry of lamentation and the poetry of praise, which included the expressions of pride and lamentation that the Fatimid poets pressed upon their master on great occasions, differs in its content from the lamentation poetry of the East in the same .period

It contains the spirit of threatening and promising punishment and it raises the slogans of vengeance. It recalls the political and military victories achieved by the Fatimids as being a support for religion and vengeance against its enemies, the killers of the Holy Family, who were the guarantors of the religion of God; it

.counts them as more than victories

The outstanding representative of this kind of poetry in this period among the Fatimids was Muhammad ibn Hani' ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'dun al-Andalusi (۳۲۰ or ۳۲۶-۳۶۲). In a poem in which he praised the Fatimid Caliph al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah, he also mentioned what happened to al-Husayn. He related that the accomplishments of the Fatimid Caliph were not through luck. Men must be united on a path that leads to .truth

They were eager to fight for religion as it called to them that it had been oppressed. The 'Abbasid caliphate was ridiculed as dependent on others and described as wandering aimlessly between the power of the Buwayhids from Daylam and the .Turks

As a result of the Fatimid Caliph doubts have been removed and truth was no longer oppressed. Then the idea of the oppression of truth made the poet turn his thought to Karbala'. He mentioned how there al-Husayn was deprived of water to perform ritual Ablutions for prayer and although the Euphrates was overflowing with water, he was .allowed none to drink

He described the stifling atmosphere of the desert and the deprivations of al-Husayn. He referred to the humiliation of the womenfolk of al-Husayn. Then he declared that 'the best grandson of Muhammad (۱) was destroyed but the next of kin who would take vengeance was not destroyed.' (This is probably a reference to Imam 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin whom the Fatimids claimed to be descended from through Imam al-Baqir and al-Sadiq. It was



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۱- It should be noticed that Ibn Hani speaks of al-Husayn as 'the best grandson of Muhammad'. It is clear that this arises out of al-Husayn being suitable-because he actually rose in rebellion-to be a subject for poetry which was of service to the political aims of the Fatimids against the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids. It was also useful because the contemporary descendants of al-Husayn did not have any great

political ambitions. On the other hand, Imam al-Hasan, because he did not actually rise in rebellion-was not suitable to be a subject for poetry which was in accord with actual political objectives. In addition to this, the descendants of al-Hasan were involved in revolution to get control of the government. Therefore to use them for moral support would have been inappropriate for the Fatimids since they wanted the .government for themselves

the Fatimids, in the eyes of the poet, who would take vengeance.) He then says that even worse than the Umayyads were those who had been contemporary with the .events but later desecrated the corpses. This is a reference to the 'Abbasids

The attack on the 'Abbasids was continued when Ibn Hani raised a historical problem of great importance, even though the historical texts do not assist him in his claim. It is that al-'Abbas helped Abu Bakr to seize power after the Apostle and kept authority .away from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib

In another poem in praise of the Fatimid Caliph, al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah, he declared that behind the rights of the son of the Apostle here were lion-hearted men who were .well-armed. He asked God that the Fatimid Caliph might now scatter the Umayyads

In what are obvious references to the suffering of al-Husayn at Karbala ', he talked of depriving them of water to drink and wash with. Then he went on to accuse men of lying when they claimed that the Umayyads had rights. They had, in fact, stripped away the right of the wasi, the true Imam who has been stipulated to act on behalf of .the umma

Ibn Hani ' again praised the Fatimid caliph in another poem but this time he mentioned the conquest of Egypt and criticized the 'Abbasids He told the inquiring 'Abbasids that Egypt had been conquered. Vengeance for the son of the Prophet had not been lost. It was the

descendants of the grandson of the Prophet who were the true rulers not the .'Abbasids

He asked them whether there were verses in the Qur 'an about the grandson of the Prophet or about their ancestor who was a late convert to Islam, 'Abbas. He accused them of imprisoning the noblest of men, namely the 'Alids, in Iraq. Then he gave a warning that soon there would be little left of the 'Abbasid empire for them. The world would be transferred to the family of Muhammad and the rights of the Talibids would .be restored

In this way, Ibn Hani ' continued to raise the slogans of vengeance and victory on behalf of the Fatimids in Egypt and North Africa against the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids at a time when these calls had ceased to be heard in the lands of the eastern caliphate and the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn and poetry in praise of .the Holy Family had lost this element from the elements which formed it

Another of the Fatimid poets was Prince Tamim, the son of the Caliph al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah (d. ٣٧۴). He composed an ode in lament for al-Husayn. He declared that as a result of the attack of the Umayyads on the Holy Family, he would pursue them until .they departed but they would find no safe haven anywhere

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We will now leave this Fatimid poetry in order to return to the poetry of lamentation in its original land. We notice that, after the

fall of the Umayyads, it was transformed into poetry of grief without any challenge or spirit of vengeance towards them. However, this was not a transformation into despair; it continued to throb with the hope that the great day of vengeance would .come

After the fall of the Umayyads, the idea of immediate vengeance lost its place in the poetry. Instead the idea of vengeance by the Mahdi, who would fill the world with justice and fair treatment after it had been full of injustice and oppression became one of the outstanding features of the poetry of lamentation from the second century .of the hijra onwards up to the present time

The Mahdi was the one who would take vengeance for al-Husayn and all the oppressed against their oppressors: Umayyads, 'Abbasids and others. His punishment would be terrible as it would correspond with the hideous crimes which these .oppressors had committed

The doctrine of the Mahdi provided a psychologically cohesive force for the Shi'ite. Thus he did not despair, he was not destroyed psychologically as a result of the discovering that the 'Abbasids-with regard to the 'Alids and their Shi'a-were only a Hashimite version of the Umayyads, or that they were even worse than the .Umayyads

We find that the 'Abbasids and those who came after them are considered, in Shi'ite consciousness, as a legal continuation of the Umayyads. Many of the texts of prayers of ziyara include passages which contain curses against the Umayyads and ,renunciations of those who followed them

.those who were their partisans and those who continued their practice

The nature of things demanded that the Shi'ite should waste away and become utterly broken as a result of the harsh and bitter situation. However, many factors connected with religious law and with doctrine, among which was the doctrine of the Mahdi, preserved his psychological cohesiveness and provided him with hope of .future happiness

The doctrine of the Mahdi provided a psychological and doctrinal refuge which saved the Sh١'ite from despair about worldly victory. This despair seemed likely in the early .period, to cast its shadow over the psychology of a section of those in the Shi'a

Dik al-Jinn (١۶١-٢٣۵ or ٢٣۶) has expressed his hope that the oppressors would receive their punishment in the Hereafter. He told his soul to be steadfast and endure. People were rushing around on the earth while its master, the Mahdi, was awaited to exact a settlement. Then on the Last Day the slain (al-Husayn) would arise and his killers would be asked why they had done it. Dreadful punishment in Hell would then follow. Until then, there must be resignation. In the future, the one who was awaited would .come

We find this spirit of worldly defeat, submission to tyranny and hope for change and for vengeance in the Hereafter is widespread in the lamentation poetry of the period later than this. However, though evidence that this idea was not expressed in other texts, as far as we know, it seems that despair had given way

.to the great expectation of a great worldly victory at the hands of the Mahdi

The third century of the hijra sees the beginning of this idea, namely the idea of the Mahdi, in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn. Among the first poets, in whose .(poetry this idea appears, is Di'bil al-Khuza'i (۱۴۸-۲۴۶

In an ode in lament and praise of the Holy Family, he declared that if it was not for him whom he hoped to come soon, grief would break his heart. The revolt of the Imam was certain and he would come forward in the name of God and with His blessings. He would distinguish right and wrong for the Shi'a and would repay men with blessings and punishment. The poet told his soul to rejoice for not far away everything was .coming

Al-Qasim ibn Yusuf, the secretary, (died in the first half of the third century of the hijra) said in part of an ode in lamentation of al-Husayn that he hoped that a hand which brought healing to the grief in the heart would bring them the Mahdi who would .arise and take control (al-qa'im al-mahdi) sooner or later

Another poet, 'Ali ibn Ishaq al-Zahi (۳۱۸-۳۵۲) mentioned concerning the Holy Family that men's eyes flowed with tears for them because of the way those tyrants treated them. How God would change things for the oppressor with the man who would arise !(qa'im) with justice, publicly announcing the truth

(Ali ibn Hammad (d. latter half of the fourth century

recorded in part of an ode in lamentation for al-Husayn an address to the Mahdi. He called upon the awaited Imam and asked him when the promise which he had given would be fulfilled. Then the poet affirmed the certainty that God would fulfill his .promise so that they would see the standard of victory

The rising of the Imam was certain. He would arise and establish the pillars of religion with swords and spears. He would administer the law with justice, fairness and guidance helped by Jesus, Joshua and al-Khidr. The poet, referring to himself by name as Ibn Hammad, hoped that he might be able to unsheathe his sword and strike against the enemies of his masters. However, if he died before then, he would .continue to fight against them by cursing them in his poetry

In part of an ode by Mihyar al-Daylami (d. ۴۲۸), he said that the time might soon come when truth would rise over the world and deficiency would be overcome. He knew that God had brought about some things but his heart would not be comforted until he .heard the call of the man who would arise and set things right, the Mahdi

In these verses Mihyar saw that vengeance had come to the Umayyads at the hands of the 'Abbasids. However, it was insufficient vengeance, and he was waiting for the .great vengeance at the hands of the Mahdi

Al-Sayyid al-Murtada (۳۵۵-۴۳۶) continued into a new period the expression of the hope of victory

at the hands of the Mahdi as a fixed element in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn.

Later, we will examine some of the examples from the later centuries and the fourth century of the hijra.

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Another element was introduced into the lamentation poetry alongside the idea of vengeance through the Mahdi. From the middle of the fourth century an idea began to appear in lamentation poetry that the vengeance would not belong to this world. It would only occur in the Hereafter. The role of the poet became limited to the enumeration of merits, the portrayal of the tragedy of Karbala' and bringing people close to God, through lamentation poetry, in the hope of gaining reward and entering Paradise.

Perhaps Abu Firas al-Hamdam (۳۲۰-۳۵۷) was the first poet in whose poetry this idea appeared in its first beginnings. Later it became firmly rooted in lamentation poetry. However, this is a matter which should be treated with caution. Attention should be paid to the personality and psychology of Abu Firas, his position with the authorities and the nature of his Shi'ism as well as the geographical position of the Hamdanid state between the 'Abbasids and the Fatimids.

All of that may have militated against his own view that revenge and vengeance were worldly and personal. Does the appearance of the idea of revenge in the Hereafter in this poetry indicate that the cause of the Holy Family had begun, at his time, to lose its political effectiveness in ordinary life in

?the area and to have become a sacred historical subject only, as happened later

Abu Firas composed an ode in lamentation for al-Husayn in which he mentioned that God seemed forbearing towards the wickedness of wicked men. Yet such men were damned and punishment would eventually come to them, even though they now seemed to think that they could kill God's children and no punishment would come to them. They even managed to suppose that they would be able to drink from the waters of Paradise while al-Husayn drunk his own blood which they had shed!

Among the poets, in whose lamentation poetry this idea appeared, is Abu al-Hasan'Ali Ahmad al-Jurjani al-Jawhan (d.c. ۳۸۰ A.H). He composed an ode in lament for al-Husayn in which he described how God saw the killers of al-Husayn dripping with his blood. They stood abashed before God while God announced that they were people who had become surrounded by evil and had exchanged true faith for the unbelief of the blind.

They killed al-Husayn as he was suffering from thirst and now they hoped for God's kindness at the waters of Paradise. Then, the poet called on God to take vengeance on them for all the evil that they had done. He asked the killers of al-Husayn what they would say in the Hereafter when Fatima was their adversary and the judge on behalf of the oppressed was God.

The poetry of Sahib Isma'il ibn 'Abbad (۳۲۶-۳۸۵) also uses this idea and he repeats it in more

.than one ode

In one of these odes he gave a similar picture of the Last Day. Fatima surrounded by her father, her husband and her sons would come looking for judgment. She would ask God why her children were slaughtered. God would tell her not to worry, as these .people were all doomed to eternal punishment in Hell-fire

In another poem Sahib ibn 'Abbad told the Shi'a not to grieve. They could be sure of God's concern and they should not try to hurry it. Soon they would see those who hated the Shi'a in the depths of the pit of Hell while they would be blessed by being .with God and the Prophet in the garden of Paradise

The same poet repeats similar words of comfort in another ode. He told the Shi'a not to worry, for on the Day of Resurrection there would be satisfaction for them when .Hell-fire blazed with the crackling sounds of punishment

Then Muhammad and his entrusted delegate (wasi), namely 'All, together with his two grandsons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn would arise for the judgment of the wrongdoers by God, who is all-powerful, all-conquering. There God would seize the evildoers and .Hell-fire would receive them

Sahib ibn 'Abbad remarked in another poem that if Muhammad saw the suffering at Karbala', if he had seen the grief-stricken sister of al-Husayn, Zaynab, being taken prisoner by one of the murderers of al-Husayn, Shimr, he would have complained to God about this-and he did complain to God about it. In the

.end Shimr would come before God and he would be most entitled to his punishment

Another of the poets who used this idea was 'Ali ibn Hammad al-'Abdi al-Basri. (He was born at the beginning of the fourth century of the hijra and died towards the end (.of it

In one ode he described a terrible picture of the punishments of the murderers of al-Husayn in the Hereafter. He said that the enemies of al-Husayn and his followers would learn the truth on the Day of Resurrection. Fatima would come forward surrounded by troops of angels. In her hand she would have the shirt of al-Husayn daubed with his blood, and the angels would weep at the sight of it. Then God would call out: 'Where is Yazid?' Yazid and his followers would be brought forward, dragging .their feet, and their faces would be black

Then God would order them to be killed and then brought back to life. All the sons of Fatima would kill them, while the Shi'a witnessed this. Then God would gather al-Husayn's murderers in Hell-fire where they would live forever. When their skins had .been thoroughly cooked by the fire, new skins would be given them to be burnt again

Al-Sharif al-Radi was another of the poets who used this idea. In one ode, he described the Apostle of God's attitude towards the murderers of al-Husayn on the Day of Judgment. He would complain to God about them. And what hope was there for people whom the Apostle

of God complains about? He would tell God how they had not given refuge to his family, they had not defended it and they had not supported it.

They had changed the religion which he had brought them and had treated his family dreadfully. He declared to God that on that day he would be their adversary and he would come before God and them as one who had been oppressed.

Another of al-Sharif al-Radis odes in lament for al-Husayn warned the killers of al-Husayn that just as they attacked people who were deprived of water on the banks of the Euphrates, so would they be attacked and deprived of the eternal waters of Paradise. There at Karbala ' the wicked had dealt out evil. Now in Heaven they would receive evil. At the final hour, they would be judged by the just grandfather, the Prophet, of the men whom they killed.

Among these poets, there was also Mu'in al-Din Yahya ibn Salmama al-Hasfaki (۴۶۰-۵۵۳). In one of his poems he pictured al-Husayn's death on the banks of the Euphrates. The Euphrates nearby could see him thirsty but 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, the son of a father who made fraudulent claims about his lineage, denied him water. Yet his death would light a blazing fire. God would be sufficient to bring punishment to those who had oppressed al-Husayn and his family.

In this way the idea of divine punishment in the Hereafter against the oppressors alongside the idea of vengeance against the oppressors

carried out by the Mahdi became two established elements in the poetry of lament for .al-Husayn

We can observe the extent of the change which had come upon the psychology of the individual when we compare this attitude which threatened direct vengeance. When the threat of divine punishment is made, it is made into a worldly tool that is looked for .and exists

Some of the verses of Khalid ibn al-Muhajir ibn Khalid ibn al-Walid expressed that idea. In them the poet warned the Umayyads that the tomb at Karbala' would be .remembered and God would be sufficient for them in His anger

Later other ideas came into the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn. One of these was the idea of salvation through the composing of poetry of lament for al-Husayn. The poet wrote his ode and at its end he begged the Holy Family and al-Husayn to be intercessors for him with God on the Day of Resurrection. Frequently he would mention his own name in the poem as if he was putting his signature at the end of the poem. This has been apparent in the poetry of lament since the ninth century of the .hijra

Another idea was of abstinence from the world and disparagement of it. This idea appeared in a limited form in lamentation poetry from the fourth century of the hijra. However, it then disappeared only to re-emerge with some force in the tenth century .of the hijra

The third idea which began to appear in lamentation poetry for al-Husayn

was the idea of fate. God had decreed what had happened. If it had not been for that, .what had happened would not have happened

The entry of these ideas into the poetic content of the lamentation indicates the emergence of a change in the psychology, the situation of life and way of thinking of the Shi'ite. The poets expressed these changes indirectly through their lamentation .poetry

Basically the cause of Karbala' was no longer able to influence the daily political life of the people as a political cause. The connection between the people and political struggle for this cause had been broken. Those who aspired to authority seem to have abandoned the use of the slogans of Karbala' in their wars and struggles. Yet, the power of these slogans to have political influence in the general mentality, still .continued

There was no longer a symbol to which the emotion of revenge was directed in the existing political situation, for every political grouping in the political arena in the Islamic world were all consciously attached to the cause of al-Husayn and acknowledged its justice. Yet it was considered as something which had happened in .history, not as something which had meaning for the present time

Indeed Shi'ism, in one way or another, had destroyed all the artificial patchwork introduced into Islam. The 'Abbasids had lost their power when the system of emirates came to be applied throughout the caliphate. The actual rulers in Baghdad became the Shi'a or those who put forward a

.claim of belonging to the Shi'a, while the rulers in Egypt were the Fatimid Shi'a

At that time factors of internal break-up in the Islamic world began to carry on the destructive work of tearing apart the great political entities within it and then in dividing up smaller political entities also. They prompted religious, political, racial and regional groupings into civil wars which brought, in their wake, ruin, despair and .destruction to the people and harm to the towns and countryside

This political situation was accompanied by the growth of the Sufi movement with its different tendencies and origins so that it became a great cultural power in opposition to the traditional Islamic scholars and in opposition to the other cultural forces of literature, science and philosophy. Sufism became the cultural and religious spring at .which the ordinary man drank

The Muslim suffered expulsion from his home and land, from tyranny, from a loss of dignity, and from the plundering of his provisions and food. He was in constant fear for his life, his honour and his dignity. He suffered from devastating famines and plagues which used to destroy thousands of people. He suffered from the destruction .of towns and the countryside by armies, which left behind them ruins and despair

As a result of this situation, the Muslim formed a pessimistic outlook, fearful of the future, in which, if there was any hope at all, it was very little. This situation produced a favourable environment for the acceptance of the ideas and tendencies

of the Sufism, of resignation which concentrated on the concept of death, the .negation of the self, the evil in the world and the corruption in the soul

It was anxious to abandon worldly activity and it put forward a concept of asceticism, which was not Islamic, an asceticism which had a negative attitude towards life and .worldly activity

We have put forward the view that this asceticism was not Islamic, because Islamic asceticism, as presented in the Qur'an and Sunna and the activities of the great representatives of Islam in the law and conduct, is a positive asceticism which combines the idea of productive work and a positive constructive attitude with a psychological and rational cohesion during disasters and tragedies, without the world .occupying all man's activity and without it possessing all the areas of his thoughts

This new psychological situation was reflected in the Muslim's life and formed all his cultural activity. Included in that was the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn, which .contained this outlook of surrender and despair of any change

As a result of this, the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn was cut off from its real place in the community. It spoke of the atrocity as history. It spoke of the glorious deed and compared the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids on the one side, with the 'Alids on the .other. It expressed tearful emotions of grief

The revolution of al-Husayn became emotional and religious. It was treated as one of the rituals, and not as a real effort in

the daily situation of man in his relations with authority and society. Among the new intellectual elements which entered into lamentation poetry for al-Husayn, as a result of the psychological situation of man, were: (a) disparagement of the world and fear of its influences. This was one of the effects of Sufi asceticism of resignation; (b) the view that lamentation for al-Husayn was a means of salvation in the Hereafter; (c) we will find in the middle of the third century of the hijra the beginnings of the expression of the idea of destiny in the poetry of lamentation. The poet expresses the view that what happened would not have happened unless God had decreed it. Sometimes we .have even found some astrological ideas

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With regard to the first of the three elements mentioned above, we sometimes find it expressed in a direct form and at other times in an indirect way which is clear to .anyone who has studied the general atmosphere in which the lament was composed

Among the examples of direct expression are the verses of an ode of Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Sanawburi (d. ۳۳۴). In these verses, the poet exclaimed that the cares of life would cease and his prayer for an easier life would be answered when he went to his death. As for a man who was constantly seeking profit, when such a man praised his activity, he should be told that praise for the family of .Muhammad was more profitable

Another

example of this kind are the verses of Sahib Isma'il ibn 'Abbad (۳۲۶-۳۸۵). These suggested that the desire for vengeance of al-Husayn was now worldly and such .emotions would not purify the man of religion

A further example comes from the poetry of'Ali ibn Hammad al- 'Abdi (d. towards end of the fourth century). In his verses, he complained of time which controlled changes in fortune and had two tongues and two faces in the world. It had harmed the Holy Family and scattered them. It seemed to have sworn to destroy men, whether they .were obstinate men or men of religion

An ode by al-Sharif al-Radi (۳۵۹-۴۰۶) portrayed a mournful resignation to the tragic death of al-Husayn. It expressed thoughts like, 'There is no one to hope and nothing to hope for.' He went on to suggest that the ultimate end of men was annihilation just .as the ultimate end of twigs was to wither away

Despite the fact that everyone capable of weeping wept for al-Husayn, the situation had remained the same for a long time and those left without children remained without them. Desires were only sadness and concern for him and one was left perplexed and grief-stricken after the son of Fatima had been swallowed up by death .in a waterless desert

The vizier 'Abd al-Mujini 'Abdun (d. ۵۲۰) composed verses in a similar vein. In these verses he complained of time which brought affliction after destruction. Time involved ,conflict because whenever it showed the two sides to any problem

these would become swords and spears fighting against each other. There could be .no peace

If one tried to escape from the world and war, it was always there ready to disturb one. When one was happy with something, it was only to make it distant from you. States disappeared and memories of them vanished. The poet feared for everything .which was protected and in which trust had been put

In this way did this tendency in lamentation poetry grew. We will find it of increasing .prominence in later centuries

It might be argued that this kind of attitude is natural in the poetry of lamentation, and we can find it at all periods and among all people. Death raises great questions in the mind about existence and destiny. These questions produce a special mental vision of .events

However, in answer to that, we would say that there is a clear difference between the attitude, which comes about as a result of the blows and tragedies of life, and the established philosophical attitude which grows out of an intellectual and psychological .situation which gives its imprint to man's behaviour and attitude towards events

The latter is what we witness in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn in this period. The poets of lamentation for al-Husayn, in representing and expressing this view, are expressing their vision of their milieu and their times because-as we have already mentioned-this view imprints itself on the cultural and artistic production of the man of that period just as

.it imprints itself on the behaviour of great sections of the people

Nonetheless we admit that the amount of expressions of this ascetic spirituality is much less in the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn than we would expect to find. In our view, this is due to two reasons, the first of which is general and the second particular. The general reason goes back to the Shi'ite attitude toward Sufism in .general

This Shi'ite attitude, as a result of the efforts of the scholars of Islamic law towards Sufism, has been less influenced by Sufi movements and tendencies. Therefore their influence has remained limited. (One should observe the relations between Shi'ism and Sufism.) Certainly, the Shi'a had their Sufi orders just as they were influenced by the general Sufi atmosphere, and a rich Sufi literature grew among them. However, the Shi'ite was less influenced by the Sufis because he remained much closer to the .scholars of Islamic law

The particular reason goes back to the nature of the tragedy of al-Husayn. There is in Shi'ite consciousness an awareness of the power of the Umayyad presence as a direct and indirect cause of all the tragedies and sufferings which befell the Holy Family at Karbala' and before and after it. This powerful presence of the Umayyads has made the Shi'ite, when exposed to tragedy, see only its anticipated objective .causes without looking for transcendental causes

Were he to do that, he would be looking for acceptable excuses for the Umayyads. He has no desire

to do that, either psychologically or emotionally. Thus he is inclined to put the burden on them entirely without finding any excuses for them in the transcendental world or .the immediate world

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The idea of lamentation for al-Husayn being a means of salvation in the Hereafter is found at a very early period in the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn. It exists at the beginning of the second century of the hijra in the work of one poet, Sufyan ibn .Mu'sab al-'Abdi al-Kufi, who died at about ١٢٠ in Kufa

In one of his odes about the Holy Family, he addressed the Commander of the faithful and told him: 'I have made love of you a companion of piety and you have increased their companionship for me as if they are the best of companions.' He went on to say that he made his soul tired in praising 'Ali in the knowledge that its rest would come as .a result of that tiredness caused by praising 'Ali

We have put forward this poem despite our doubts about the genuineness of its attribution to the first century of the hijra, because of our doubt about the circulation of this style of dedicating odes to the people who were being praised. This was something which is only known of in a much later period of history. However, we put forward this poem in order to say that, on the assumption of its genuineness, it would be the first text to include this

.kind of dedication as far as we are aware

This doubt is based on the doubtfulness of the use of this style of dedication as we have said. These verses are also attributed to Ibn Hammad al-'Abdi (d. towards end of the fourth century). As for the origin of the idea of salvation through poems of praise and lamentation, it has a doctrinal basis in the Sunna of the Prophet where there are texts which make love and affection for the Holy Family and their followers a means of pleasing God, of course in accordance with keeping the rules of the Islamic way of .(life (sharia

We observe that al-'Abdi, the poet, did not confine the attainment of salvation to love and praise. He, also, coupled action with it. Thus he was loyal to the Islamic way of life. He said: 'I have made love for you a companion of piety, and you have increased their companionship for me as if they are the best of companions.' Such an idea is missing from lamentation poetry, and we do not find any expression of it until the beginnings of the fourth century of the hijra where we find that it has become a widespread characteristic in the odes of praise and lamentation for al-Husayn by the poets of the .Shi'a

However, we do find it in another form which is in terms of the words alone, or in ,terms of the love alone, as a way to salvation in the Hereafter. It is

however, seldom that we find the poet expressing his concern about the Islamic way .of life (shari'a) in this area

Among the poets who portray this idea in their poetry is Ahmad ibn al-Hasan al-Sanawburi (d. ٣٣٤). His poetry portrays this idea alongside keeping close to the Islamic way of life (shari'a). In one poem he said that those who followed the guidance of the family of Muhammad would be successful. He, himself, strove and toiled to do that .and nothing else. Perhaps God would forgive him his sins

Another of the representatives of this idea is Kashajim (died ٣٥٠ or ٣٦٠). In one poem he refers to the praises given to the Holy Family. He tells them that he needs to love them when he is summoned to the final judgment, for he is certain that through his .love for them his sins will fall from him like dust

Al-Zahi (٣١٨-٣٥٢) is another of these poets. In some verses, he says that they hope that God will remove their grievous sins through their grief and weeping for the Holy Family, and that it will bring them intercession from the grandfather of the Holy .Family, the Prophet

A poet who expresses similar sentiments is Sahib ibn 'Abbad (٣٢٦-٣٨٥). In one poem he describes himself growing old and hopes that this praise for the Holy Family of the Prophet will bring forgiveness for his sins. They are masters who take praise rightfully as theirs and leaders whose glory is spread by word and by the

sword. Ibn 'Abbad, mentioning himself by name, hopes to gain closeness to them by .his praises of them and that these praises will bring perfection

In another poem Ibn 'Abbad declares that he praises God, Lord of the throne, and his masters, the Holy Family. He calls on a Kufan to recite these words. Yet he makes it clear that he, Ibn 'Abbad, is their author, again he mentions himself by name. Then he .adds that he seeks Heaven through these praises

Ibn Hammad al-'Abdi (d. towards end of the fourth century hijra) is one of the poets of lamentation for al-Husayn who, in our view, uses this style of dedication most frequently and also most frequently expresses the idea of salvation through his love .and praise of the Holy Family

In one poem he asserts, using his name, Ibn Hammad al-'Abdi, that the only work he has is to use the letters mim and 'ayn in poetry. The letter mim is the ultimate of his hopes as Muhammad belongs to it. (It is the first letter of Muhammad's name.) The letter 'ayn is most concerned with 'Ali (the first letter of his name) who is a delight of the eye ('ayn in Arabic and therefore also of the letter 'ayn). He calls upon God to bless .them whenever the sun rises and sets

At the end of one of his odes he asks God to receive his poem in praise of the Holy Family and that the reward for his poem should be

fulfilled, namely that his scale should be balanced with good on the Day of Judgment. He goes on to say that he loves and praises them and curses anyone who avoids them. He declares that he never praises them out of acquisitiveness but only out of love for them. Mentioning himself by name, he says that Ibn Hammad hopes for the .reward of heaven through praising them

Another of the poets using these expressions is Mihyar al-Daylami (d. ۴۲۸). In one poem, he asks how much his praises of the Holy Family will help him. He tells them that it is their duty at the Resurrection to weigh his balance with good if it is short in weight. Then he asserts that he is certain that his hopes in them will be true on that .day, and not false

In another poem, he talks about how much the man who envies him wished that he had not been alive at that time so that the poet could compete with him through composing poetry in praise of the Holy Family. He tells his rival that the rival's desire is for the world while he knows that the black marks in God's account of his action will .become white on the Day of Resurrection through his praise of the Holy Family

The poet, Tala'i ' ibn Zurayk (d. ۵۵۶) also wrote verses expressing similar ideas. In one ode, he tells his masters from the Holy Family that although his spear had not helped them in

battle, he would support them with his verses. He has written poetry to preserve their memory and glory. Then he goes on to say that he hopes that through his love and .sincerity towards them he will escape from Hell-fire in the life to come

Ibn Jabr (۴۲۰-۴۸۷) composed poetry with similar sentiments. In some of his verses, he says that if you weep for the Holy Family, you will meet them with a joyful face in the Hereafter. The poet asks God to make his love of them a shield for him against the evils of oppression and unbelief. Then he hopes that when the debts of the enemies of the family of Muhammad keep them locked out of Heaven, his poetry in praise of .them will redeem his debts and bring him success

The poets of lamentation for al-Husayn have continued to express this idea in this fashion right up to modern times. We will study later where the poetry of lamentation .has adopted other forms and other content

?What is the psychological background of this poetic attitude

From the beginning of the fourth century of the hijra, the Shi'ite had lost his active contact with his doctrinal symbols. In this his situation was similar to the Muslim in general. He, too, had lost his active contact with his doctrinal symbols. Pessimistic and negative thoughts began to dominate. Action lost its sincere and transforming power .in his consciousness

A Sufi tendency and attitude influenced by ideas of magical powers over things prevailed

in the popular Islamic mentality. Words and, in the most favourable circumstances, emotions and good intentions became the things which, the Muslim imagined, would .be able to change the situation

Because of this psychological and cultural situation, its effect began to appear even in Islamic law (e.g. a great concern with the forms and practices of worship, hypothetical problems in juris- prudence, numerous vows, the ceremonies of the Prophet's .(birthday and the recitation of certain texts to gain victory in battles

The misery of the Shi'ite has increased, as a result of his sectarian affiliation, because not only was he continuing to face, in many of the historical stages of this period, .official hostility, he even began to face popular antipathy

This was when some of the extremist theologians and legal scholars of the Sunnis succeeded in presenting the Shi'ite to their common people as being outside Islam. Perhaps the growth of Persian Shi'ism and its adoption of a political character through the foundation of the Safavid state helped in the growth of hatred toward the Shi'a .outside the authority of the Safavid state

## IV. The Themes Of The Poetry Of Lamentation For Al-Husayn

### point

The poetry of lament for al-Husayn is generally in agreement with the genre of lamentation poetry in many of the shared themes which inevitably abound in lamentation poetry. The poetry of lament for al-Husayn differs from the rest of lamentation poetry by the fact that it, alone, deals with some themes which arise out .of the special nature of the subject

Whether independent of or included with others, the poetry of

.lament comes in several ways

Sometimes, it comes independently when a poet composes an ode which is solely concerned with lamenting for al-Husayn and the martyrs at Karbala '. Most of the .poetry of lament for al-Husayn is like that

Sometimes, it comes as part of a general lament for the Holy Family. Sometimes, the .lament comes in the context of a defamatory poem about the Umayyads

Sometimes, it comes in the context of praising some rulers or leaders. This was the case in some of the poems of praise of Muhammad ibn Hani' al-Andalusi (۳۲۰ or ۳۲۶-۳۶۲) about al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah, the Fatimid. The same occurs in some of the poems of praise by al-Qadi al-Julays 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn al-Husayn (d. ۵۶۱) about the good ruler, .Tala 'i' ibn Zurayk

With regard to the person to whom the poem of lament for al-Husayn is addressed, it can come in the following ways: Sometimes, it is a speech to the poet's soul and a conversation with himself. Sometimes, the address in it is made to the Apostle of God, and it is a presentation of the incidents and circumstances of the revolution and other .such topics

Sometimes, the address in it is made to the Twelfth Imam, the awaited Mahdi. Sometimes, the address in it is made to the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Talib or .the Lady Fatima, the fair

Sometimes, it is addressed to the Islamic umma. Sometimes, it is addressed to the Umayyads. Sometimes, it is addressed to the Hashimites. One poem

.may include several forms of address

In what follows, we will examine, in brief, the themes of the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn. We will not persist in giving examples from the poetry on every theme because such elaboration would serve little purpose and the specialist can easily find .the example for himself

### Human Grief

The assumption made about lamentation poetry is that it has been composed to express emotions of sadness and grief for the loss of a noble person. Therefore, the expression of human grief is a common feature in all lamentation poetry. The laments .may include a number of features by which it expresses this grief

There is a kind of lament which is given the name 'dirge' (nadb). It is concerned only with the expression of the emotion of grief and occurs frequently in the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn, whether ancient or modern. It is recited with a kind of loud wailing. Sometimes it is accompanied by bodily movements like striking one's face in .grief

Among the examples of that are the verses attributed to al-Rabab, wife of Imam al-Husayn. In it she cries out to al-Husayn, saying that she will never forget al-Husayn .'who was killed by the spears of enemies, who left him a corpse at Karbala

Another example is given by al-Mufid in his book, al-Amali. He says that Dharra, a professional wailing-woman, saw in a dream the Lady Fatima, the fair, who accompanied her to the tomb of al-Husayn and wept. She told her to recite some verses in

(.the wailing manner. (It is said that these verses were by one of the Kufan poets

The verses call upon the eyes to overflow with tears and make them fall copiously. They should weep for the dead on the Banks of the Euphrates, whose heart was left .broken

* * *

At this point we should notice that there is a kind of lamentation poetry for al-Husayn which is not concerned with the expression of grief as is the case in the rest of lamentation poetry. It is in fact without any expression of grief. It is the kind of .'lamentation poetry for al-Husayn which could be termed a 'eulogy

In it the poet does not express his grief and sadness. He only speaks of the virtues and qualities of al-Husayn and the Holy Family in facing the wicked actions of their .enemies. This kind of poetry is usually artistically weak and is lacking in any beauty

### Nature's Grief

This is an extension of human grief. Frequently a poet makes nature a partner in his grief. Or he may regard the momentous tragedy as not so much a human catastrophe as a cosmic one. For this reason the material world trembles at the terrible tragedy .which has befallen al-Husayn, his family and his followers

The poet sees grief in the earth, in the sky, in the mountains and in the seas. He questions them and holds a dialogue with them about the disaster. When he sees that they continue as they were, he is surprised

and amazed that the mountains have not split asunder, that the earth has not swallowed up its inhabitants, that the seas have not sunk into the earth. that the stars .have not fallen like meteorites on the criminals

Sulayman ibn Qatta (d. ١٢٥) gives expression to some of these sentiments in the poem where he describes how he passed the houses of the family of Muhammad. On the day of the tragedy he had never seen anything like it. The sun had become sick .because of the killing of al-Husayn, and the land trembled

Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i expresses similar ideas in his poem where he says: 'The world shook for the family of Muhammad. Solid mountains almost melted for them. The stars sank down and constellations quavered. Veils were rent and caves .split open

Abu al-Firas al-Hamdani (٣٢٠- ٣٥٧) described in another poem how the sun changed, .on the day it happened, and the clouds wept blood because of what they had seen

Some of the poets make the animal world behave like the material world. A poet may consider that the animals in the desert sand the forests are sad and sorrowful, .perhaps even weeping

### The Grief of the Angels and the Jinn

Another of the cosmic manifestations of grief for al-Husayn is the picture given by lamentation poetry of the grief of the angel and the jinn. An example of that can be cited from the poetry of al-Sanawburi (d. ٣٣٤). The poet declares that jinn, man and the noble angels all weep, without exception, at the limbs dyed red

.with his blood

## The Virtues of the Holy Family .۴

### Their Personal Virtues

The poets of lamentation poetry demonstrate the noble natures of the Holy Family, their self-sacrifice, their knowledge of the Islamic way of life (shari'a), their clemency and forgiveness towards those who wronged them and attacked them, and their bravery and skill. In his exposition of their great courage, a poet will indicate that the courage of al-Husayn, his family and his followers was such that it would ensure the .defeat of the enemy army unless God had decreed otherwise

This theme of the personal virtues of the Holy Family, alongside their other virtues, is .one of the most frequently occurring themes in the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn

### Their Religious Virtues

On this subject, the poet reviews the honour God has bestowed upon them in the Qur 'an, their great knowledge of the Islamic way of life (shari'a), the fact that they are the true successors of the Apostle of God, the designation made on 'Ali at al-Ghadir and the other texts referring to them, the Tradition of the Apostle about the two weighty things he was leaving as guides to the umma after his death (the Qur'an and his family), the way that they were wronged by being denied the caliphate. All these ideas, and others like them, are also frequently occurring themes in lamentation .poetry

### Their Family Background as Direct Descendants of the Apostle of God

The Shi'a of the Holy Family laid great emphasis on this unique quality which the Imams of the Holy Family enjoy, with all that it entails in terms of sanctity, respect and .rights of inheritance

The poets who supported

the Holy Family made this a basic theme of all the poetry which they composed, whether in praise of or in lament for the Holy Family. They were aware that kinship was, and still is, a most important influence providing a moral power to a relative, .especially in early Islamic society

The argument of kinship was used at the meeting held in the hall of the Banu Sa'ida by the Ansar after the Prophet's death against their aspirations to succeed the Apostle of God in the political dispute which took place between the Ansar and the emigrants of the Quraysh about who had the right to succession after the Apostle of God. The spokesman of Quraysh argued: 'Who can dispute our right to the authority of '.Muhammad while we are his next of kin and his tribe

Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib has made the bitter comment on what took place at the hall of the Banu Sa'ida, that since Quraysh had argued that they were closer in kinship to the Apostle of God than the Ansar and therefore had more right to succession, it was more fitting for them to hand over power to the Hashimites as they were closer in .kinship to the Apostle of God than the rest of Quraysh

In the general view, this aspect of close relationship used to be a strong argument in support of the demand of the Shi'a of the Holy Family that the government should be handed over to their Imams. For this reason

it was one of the basic intellectual, political and legal preoccupations of the Umayyad .regime, and after them the 'Abbasid regime

It appears that the Umayyads in Syria took refuge in creating a general impression with the people that the Prophet had no other kin than them. The words of the Syrian delegation to Abu al-'Abbas al-Saffah (the first 'Abbasid caliph) after the fall of the Umayyad regime indicate that, for they swore that they did not know that the Prophet .had any other kin than the Umayyads

Sometimes the Umayyads used storytellers, whom they frequently employed, to accomplish this aim. They were, also, anxious to follow a policy of isolating the Syrians .from contact with any outside cultural influence

Outside Syria, the Umayyad regime, and afterwards the 'Abbasid regime, strove in another way, namely culturally on the basis of jurisprudence and relationship. Both regimes concentrated on the argument that the son of the daughter was not a direct descendant, and that therefore al-Hasan, al-Husayn and the Imams who were .descendants of al-Husayn were not direct descendants of the Apostle of God

An example of the attempts in the Umayyad period is a violent dispute between al-Hajjaj al-Thaqafi and Yahya ibn Ya’mur al-'Adawani al-Basri (d. ١٢٨). In it al-Hajjaj denied that al-Hasan and al-Husayn were direct descendants of the Apostle of God. He tried to produce evidence for that from the Qur 'an. Yahya ibn Yamur put forward .the Qur 'anic proof that the son of the daughter was a direct descendant

This

was when God counted Jesus as among the progeny of Abraham with the words: 'We gave him Issac and Jacob, each of whom We guided. And before We guided Noah, and among his progeny, David, Soloman, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron. Thus do we reward those who do good. And Zakariya, John and Jesus...(١) There is a much greater distance between Jesus and Abraham than there is between al-Hasan and al-Husayn .and Muhammad

The 'Abbasids too, were unable to distort the true nature of the family background of the 'Alids. At the same time they were also exposed to great danger from this family claim of the 'Alids, for we can observe that the descendants from the line of al-Hasan strove unceasingly to raise difficulties for them. For this reason, the 'Abbasids concentrated on trying to repudiate the 'Alid claim that they were more closely related to the Apostle of God, and therefore had more right to the caliphate than the .'Abbasids

The 'Abbasids maintained this by arguing, with regard to the problem of the son of the daughter and the paternal uncle and the sons of the paternal uncle, that the sons of the daughter were not direct descendants and had no right to inheritance, whereas the paternal uncle had closer kinship than the son of the daughter and more right to inheritance. Thus they aimed to put 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and his progeny outside the law .because the Prophet died while his paternal uncle, al-'Abbas, was still alive

In



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١- Qur 'an, ۶:٨۴-٨۵.

.this way the problem was given a legal dimension

The 'Abbasids intimated to the poet, Marwan ibn Abi Hafsa who was an anti-'Alid who hated the Holy Family, that he should introduce this argument into his poetry. He composed an ode in which he maintained that it was not right that the sons of daughters could be heirs before paternal uncles.(۱)

The problem had now become a subject of heated poetic controversy. It raised a storm of reactions from the poets of the Shi'a. They reviled the 'Abbasids through Nathala, wife of al-'Abbas, in order to show the difference between her and the mother of the 'Alids, the Lady Fatima, the fair. They brought up the subject of the way al-'Abbas became a Muslim and the fact that he was among those who embraced .Islam only at the conquest of Mecca by the Prophet

One of the poets who replied in this way was Jafar ibn'Affan al-Ta'i (d.c.۱۵۰). He pointed out in one of his poems that the daughter received half of the inheritance while the uncle was left without any share. In any case a late convert such as 'Abbas .had no right to any inheritance as he only prayed as a Muslim out of fear of the sword

Al-Shaykh al-Sadug has reported in his book, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida, that a group of men came to visit Imam 'Ali al-Rida. They saw that he had become changed and they asked him why. He replied: 'I have spent the night awake thinking about the



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۱ - Abd Allah ibn As'ad al-Yafi'i al-Tamimi, Mirat al- Janan wa-'Ibrat al-Yaqzan .(Hyderbad, ۱۳۳۷ A.H.) I, ۲۷۱-۲۷۲

words of Marwan ibn Hafsa' -he recited the verse previously mentioned – ‘and then I fell asleep. Then I saw a man who had taken hold of the door-post while he was '.reciting verses

In these verses quoted by Imam 'Ali Rida, the poet in his dream declared that polytheists did not have the rights of those who had been supporters of Islam. The sons of the daughter did have a share in inheritance from their grandfather but the .paternal uncle was left without any

A late convert such as al-'Abbas had no right to any inheritance as he only prostrated himself as a Muslim out of fear of the sword. The Qur'an has told of his true merit and judgement has been passed against him. The son of Fatima, who is extolled by his name, possesses the right of inheritance to the exclusion of the sons of paternal uncles. The son of Nathala remains standing hesitantly and weeps while the true .kindred are happy

It appears that the 'Abbasids went to extremes in their attempt to distort the reputation of the 'Alids and undermine their family background. They even used poetry against them, something which had never happened in Islam. The first to do this was the 'Abbasid prince, 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mu'tazz (۲۴۴ ۲۹۶).(۱)

Almost a century later, in the fourth century of the hijra, he was followed by the 'Abbasid Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah, who is known as Ibn Sakra. There must have been others beside these two who took



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۱- Ibn al-Muttazz has been described as the most hostile person to the 'Alids in the umma in a piece of poetry which was composed on his failure to keep power against al-Muqtadir after having received the pledge of allegiance for the caliphate in ۲۹۶. Ibn al-Athir, op. cit., VIII, ۱۷. The same author also comments (ibid., ۱۸) on the pledge of allegiance to Ibn Mu'tazz that one of the most surprising features of it was that al-Husayn ibn Hamdan, despite his strong Shi'ite attitude and his inclinations towards 'Ali and the Holy Family, strove to achieve the pledge of allegiance for Ibn al-Muttaz even

.though the latter was hostile towards 'Ali and extremely hostile to the 'Alids

part writing defamatory poetry against the 'Alids. This defamatory poetry was, however, met by a storm of protest from the poets of the Shi'a, who matched it with verses in which they lampooned the 'Abbasids and extolled the virtues of the Holy .Family

Among the replies made to Ibn Muttazz are the poems of al-Qadi al-Tannukhi (d. ۳۴۲), Tamim ibn Ma'ad al-Fatimi (d. ۳۷۴), Safi al-Din al-Hilli (۶۷۷-۷۵۲). It seems that the poets of the Shi'a did not dare to reply to Ibn al-Mu'tazz during the period of 'Abbasid strength and power. The replies which have come down to us are much later than the time of Ibn al-Mu'tazz, since the earliest of them is al-Qadi al-Tannukhi who died half .a century later than Ibn Muttazz

The Shi'ite poet, al-Husayn ibn al-Hajjaj (d. ۳۹۱) wrote replies to the 'Abbasid Ibn .Sakra

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We have devoted some space to the discussion of the problem of kinship and family background in order to explain the emphasis which the Shi'ite poets gave to the Holy Family in their poems of praise and lament. Indeed the relationship was subjected to Umayyad and 'Abbasid attempts which aimed at belittling this importance, or even at rooting out its importance by denying the evidence for the great significance of .kinship and its legal and political implications

Therefore the Shi'ite poets directed themselves to making it a reality in the general consciousness of the umma by causing every contrary attempt to be doomed to failure. They were given the greatest

.possible success in that

## The Human Enemies of the Revolution

### point

Mention is frequently made in the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn of the group of people or individuals who had some role in the revolution, whether at the beginning, .during the actual events or in the course of its consequences

### The Muslims

When Muslims are mentioned in the poetry of lament for al-Husayn in terms of blame, it means the supporters and friends of the Umayyad regime. These are described as .traitors to their faith and their religious duty; they are rebels against God

They are regarded as men who abandoned giving support to what they believed to be true because they preferred the world and its ornaments. They are considered to be men who broke faith with the Apostle of God by not safeguarding him through his .offspring

Sometimes the poet accuses them in terms of the law by considering them as men who have disobeyed their religious obligations. At other times he accuses them in moral terms by describing their treachery, their lack of trustworthiness and their .disloyalty (١)

### The Kufans and the Iraqis

These are regarded as the Muslims most responsible for what happened. They wrote to al-Husayn asking him to come and promising to support him. They reneged on their .promises. Yet they did not limit this to breach of faith and desertion

Some of them, including most of their leaders, actually stood alongside the Umayyad oppressors despite the letters which they were involved in writing to ask al-Husayn to come to them. Verses by Tala'i' ibn Zurayk show this. He describes how when

۱- Cf. Jawad Shubbar, op. cit., I, ۱۹۲ which gives an example by Ja'far ibn 'Affan.

the tribes of Iraq summoned al-Husayn, he answered them. Yet when he summoned them, they did not listen. Hypocrisy was spread among them at Karbala' when they .had claimed to belong to the Shi'a. May God punish them for what they did

### The Umayyads

These are considered the real criminals who were directly responsible. At their head come Mu'awiya and his son, Yazid. Other attacks on the Holy Family which took place .during the Umayyad period are mentioned and the Umayyads take the blame

### Other men and Women

In particular the poets mention Hind, the mother of Mu'awiya, Summayya, the grandmother of 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, among other women through whom the Umayyads and their followers may be cursed. Ziyad and his son, 'Ubayd Allah are mentioned together with Umar ibn Sa'd and Shimr ibn Dhi Jawshan as being, with .' Yazid, the worst criminals at Karbala

### The Women of the Holy Family

Another theme of the lamentation poetry are the women of the Holy Family. The Lady Fatima, the fair, is frequently mentioned and consoled for the death of al-Husayn .when the dreadful events are described

Zaynab is mentioned: her state on the journey; her state at Karbala '; her conversations with al-Husayn and al-'Abbas, or with her nephews, 'Ali al-Akbar and 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, or with her sister, Umm Kulthum, or with her niece, Sakina. Her circumstances when they were taken prisoner are mentioned and the words she spoke to Shimr, 'Umar ibn Sa'd, Ibn Ziyad and Yazid ibn Mu’awiya, or to the Umayyad .soldiers generally

Sakina, the daughter of al-Husayn, is remembered in scenes

with her father, Imam al-Husayn, before his death and in a pathetic scene after his .death on the battlefield, and also in conversation with Shimr

Al-Rabab, the wife of Imam al-Husayn, is particularly mentioned when her child, 'Abd Allah, is discussed. This element concerned with the women of the Holy Family in lamentation poetry is not only presented for its own sake. It is also presented as one of the elements which raise emotions. When it is mentioned for its own sake, the .women are presented as a group and not as individuals

This happens when the 'daughters of the Apostle of God' are humiliated by the Umayyads or the Kufans or the Muslims. Some of the scenes of battle are dealt with in this way especially, like the burning of the tents and the women and children fleeing from the fire, or the plundering of al-Husayn's camp and family by the Umayyad soldiers, or becoming prisoners and the scene of the women and children being made to ride on emaciated camels without humps, or the scene of the heads raised on .spears in the midst of the prisoners

### The Children and the Young Men of the Holy Family

The children of the Holy Family are seldom mentioned as an independent theme in the poetry, and even less frequently than that are the names of the children given. The exception is 'Abd Allah, the baby who was slaughtered, as he was in the lap of this father, Imam al-Husayn, by an arrow which was shot at him. The other children are rarely

.mentioned

An example of one being mentioned are the verses of al-Nashi ' al-Saghir Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-Wasif (۲۷۱-۳۶۵). He describes little Fatima, whom grief has clothed in the garments of humiliation, calling to her grandfather, saying, '.'Grandfather, after such a loss, we want revenge

The young men of the Holy Family are occasionally mentioned, in particular when there is a description of those of the Hashimite young men who were killed. The poets then bring out the most moving aspects about them: their beauty, their bravery, their .thirst and their self-sacrifice

The most frequently mentioned are al-' Abbas ibn 'Ali,' Ali al-Akbar ibn al-Husayn and .al-Qasim ibn al-Hasan

#### The Story of the Battle

The poets usually describe the battle which took place at Karbala ' in a general way but in some cases in great detail. In the poetry of some of the later poets of lamentation, the story is presented in the form of a dialogue which the poet recounts: 'He said . . . They replied . . . One man said . . . One woman said . . .' Sometimes it is '. . . presented in the form of a speech to the Apostle of God, 'O Grandfather

Some poets mention only the events without giving their more distant causes while others indicate the causal relations between the battle at Karbala' and the problem of the caliphate. They see the earlier mistake of depriving 'Ali of the caliphate as being responsible for forming the attitudes which finally led to the

.'catastrophe at Karbala

## Water and Thirst

Thirst is one of the basic themes of the poetry of lament for al-Husayn. The poets have given expression to it in several ways. They picture the sufferings from thirst of al-Husayn, the women, the children and the rest of the men. They turn their attention to the river Euphrates whose water is deprived to the Holy Family with various '!expressions of blame such as, 'How far off is your water, O Euphrates

Al-Sanawburi (d. ٣٣٤) gives some examples of the treatment of water and thirst in lamentation poetry. He described al-Husayn being driven from the waters of the .Euphrates as a misfortune which brought further misfortune

He was not able to drink from it while the swords drunk deep draughts of his blood. The poet asked the Euphrates why it had not helped when it gave water to wicked men and women to drink, Yet how many of the sons and daughters of Fatima had .been kept away from it without having committed any crime

## Karbala': The Bank of the Euphrates and the Graves

Every ode of lamentation mentions Karbala ' or the Bank of the Euphrates. The name Karbala ' is associated in lamentation poetry with grief (karb) and misfortune (bala'). .The poets frequently repeat this idea

It appears that in the early poetry Karbala' was treated as an object to be blamed and cursed because it had witnessed the deaths of the Holy Family. We know of one example including such as a curse which is attributed to al-Rabab, the wife of the .Imam

She calls to al-Husayn

and declares that she had not forgotten when the swords of the enemies were directed against him and how they left him dead at Karbala'. Then she calls upon God .'not to water the banks of the river at Karbala

However, it appears that this attitude did not continue for long. The idea which becomes most repeated with regard to Karbala ' -perhaps because of the reports which the Holy Family circulated among their followers- is that Karbala ' is blessed and sacred ground. In lamentation poetry, Karbala' became a beloved land because it contained the bodies of the holy loved ones. It became the practice of the poets of .lamentation to speak of it with grief and love

In poetry it then came to receive prayers for divine blessings and for God to water it. It is still, in some of the poetry, a place of grief (karb) and misfortune (bala'). Yet it is a grief which happened and its role has finished and a misfortune which took place and the people involved endured it. Now it has become a place of loved ones, an area of sad memories, a scene of legendary heroism, a place where the angels of God come down, and a site of divine blessings for those who are honoured by making .pilgrimages to it

Mansur al-Numayri (d. ١٩٠ or ١٩٣) wrote a poem in which he reported that time was attacking the son of Fatima in the soil of Karbala' while the traces of the abodes of

the people sleeping in their graves were being destroyed. The poet calls for greetings and blessings to be upon that place and for God to send unceasing and hoped for rain .upon it

In another poem al-Sanawburi calls on the pilgrim to greet Karbala ' and not to be disgusted at such greeting but to speak as lovingly as he can. He calls upon him to greet the abodes whose outlines on the banks of the Euphrates have become well-known signs. They should be called the abodes of the Apostle of God and the fountain .of messages

There should be the prayer for peace to be upon them for as long as the sun and moon rise over creation. The poet goes on to say that he stopped at the graves and spoke to them. Then he stopped at the best of them; pure grave which contained the purest of bones. The most fragrant breeze is for those whom it blows upon from the pure flowers on the hillside. Let rain fall upon the ground in the mornings and let rain .not part from it in the evenings

In another poem al-Sanawburi calls on the man urging his camel along to stop and not to move on from the bank of the Euphrates at Karbala'. It is the place where his desire has led him and he asks the camel-driver to share in his desire. The land on the bank of the Euphrates at Karbala' is the land which belongs to God

and a land of guidance. He calls on everybody whether coming at night or in the .morning to greet the bank of the Euphrates and its inhabitants in their graves

The poet Muhammad ibn al-Husayn, known as Kashajim, (d.٣٥٠ or ٣٦٠) mentioned in one of his poems that the day was dark at Karbala'. Then it cleared of clouds while they lay slaughtered. The rain does not cease falling on that land and every sunrise .reckons up its coming in the morning and in the night

### The Humiliation of Quraysh and the Humiliation of Islam and the Muslims

From the first century of the hijra, the poet of lamentation poetry for al-Husayn regarded the killing of al-Husayn and his family and followers as a humiliation of Islam and Muslims. On rare occasions the poet considers that the killing of al-Husayn has .brought humiliation to Quraysh or to the Hashimites

Abu Rumayh, Umayr ibn Malik al-Khuza'i (d.c. ١٠٠) wrote a poem in which he declared that clouds of tears were racing across his eyes. They would not dry up after the tears were shed until they flowed with tears again. They were weeping for the family of the .Prophet Muhammad

How many were these tears, yet how few in view of what happened! Those people had not drawn their swords while their enemies killed them when they were drawn. The man from the Hashimites killed on the bank of the Euphrates was the most .humiliated man of Quraysh and Quraysh were humiliated as well

Perhaps this poet and other like him were giving expression to a tribal

view of the subject and regarding what happened as a personal struggle. Soon, .however, this misleading view gave way to the correct view of the subject

Throughout the Islamic era the poet of lamentation poetry has considered what happened as an Islamic concern, meaning Islam as a religion and the Muslims as an umma. What happened at Karbala ' was sacrilege against Islam and an act of .aggression against Muslims

When Abu al-Rumayh recited these verses, previously mentioned, to Fatima, daughter of al-Husayn and she heard the words,'. . . the most humiliated man of Quraysh and Quraysh were humiliated as well,' she said to him, 'Abu Rumayh, do you speak of it like that?' 'How should I speak of it, may God make me a ransom for you?' he asked. She replied, 'Say: . . . the most humiliated man of the Muslims and the Muslims were humiliated as well.' He is reported to have said that after that day he .only recited verses in the way she told him

The poet of lamentation considered that al-Husayn was a hope for Islam which had been extinguished when the Umayyads killed him. Therefore Muslims were .humiliated by his death

Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali (d. ۶۹) had said: 'O conveyor of the news of the death of religion, who announces the death of piety, arise and announce his death and the '.... death of his family

Ja'far ibn'Affan (d. ۱۵۰) had said: 'Let whoever can weep, weep for Islam. Its laws have .been lost and misappropriated

p: ۲۰۶

In the morning al-Husayn was defiled by spears. Swords drunk from his blood and '.took a second draught

Mansur al-Numayri (d. ١٩٠ or ١٩٣) had said: 'I would have sacrificed my life for al-Husayn when he went out towards death never to return. That was a day which '.... advanced with the sword against the summit of Islam

### The Meeting with the Apostle of God and the Holy Family

The poet of lamentation frequently asks the Umayyads directly, or he asks the killers (the Umayyad army), or he asks the umma (the helpers of the Umayyads): How will you meet the Apostle of God, 'Ali and Fatima on the Day of Resurrection? What will you answer when they ask you about your attitude towards their sons? How will you ask them to intercede for you with God when will you have done what you have done ?to their sons

An example of that is the verses of Umm Luqman bint 'Aqil ibn Abi, Talib. She said: 'What will you say if the Prophet asks you: What have you, the last umma, done with my offspring and my family after my death? Some of them are prisoners and some of '.them are stained with blood

Similarly Mansur al-Numayri has said in his verses: 'Woe upon the killer of al-Husayn, you have gained a burden which will make the one who carries it fall down. With what face will you meet the Prophet when you have become involved in killing al-Husayn? '.... ?Will you ask for his intercession tomorrow or not

Another example of that is from the

verses of al-Jurjani al-Jawhari. He said: 'They were abashed before their father on a day that he saw them dripping dizzily with red blood. He will say: O umma what error surrounds? You have exchanged faith for the unbelief of the blind. What crime did I '?commit against you when I brought the good of the Qur'an

**.The Martyrs**

The martyrs who were killed at Karbala' with Imam al-Husayn are given special honour in lamentation poetry. Hardly any poem is without some mention and praise of them, sometimes for their religious conscience and at other times for their loyalty to the Prophet. In every case, the poet lays emphasis on their courage and their self-.sacrifice by dying with the Imam

Among the poets who mention them is 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Hurr al-Ju'fi (d. ۶۸). He calls upon God to let the rain fall constantly on the souls of those who set out to help al-Husayn. He describes himself standing at their graves while his stomach churns with .grief and his eyes fill with tears

He swears by his life that they were heroes in the battle which they hurried to. Then he imagines how they consoled one another by helping the son of the daughter of the Prophet with their swords like fierce lions. If they were killed, every pious soul should have become shocked at that. No one has seen more excellent men than them; they .were leaders and the flower of men in the face of death

Talha ibn 'Ubayd Allah al-'Awni al-Misri

d. ٣٥٠) also composed verses about them. He said: 'His close associates defended him) and embraced the swords and spears. They were seventy against thousands and '.they were covered in wounds. Then they all were struck dead and met their fate

The emir Muhammad al-Susi (d. ٣٧٠) described their heroism in some of his verses. He told of the man who brought the news of the death of a great man on the banks of the Euphrates. It was the news of the death of al-Husayn. The poet says that he wishes he could sacrifice his soul to alleviate how al-Husayn was surrounded by enemies. Yet he was with men who helped each other, comforted each other and fought the .fiercest battle until they died

### The Hardship the Poets Faced because of their Allegiance

We find this phenomenon in the poetry in praise and in lamentation for the Holy Family from the first century of the hijra and it has continued to appear on the tongues of the poets until the beginnings of the modern period. It reflects the atmosphere of the terrorization which the Shi'a used to face from the authorities and groups of people who were fanatically opposed to them when the Shi'a tried to .express their own doctrinal views

We have given many examples of this kind of phenomenon in the poetry of praise and lamentation during the course of this discussion. Another example can be cited from the verses of al-Sharif al-Murtada. In these, the poet declares his love for the family of the Prophet and asserts that

.he will never turn aside from it even though men may blame him for it

He tells those who blame him for his love of the Holy Family that to be insincere is .blameworthy. He tells them not to revile him with their errors, for he will never submit

### Support with the Tongue

Another of the themes of this poetry is the poet's view of his poetry of praise or lament as a support for the Holy Family with his tongue after he had not been able to help them with his hand because he had forsaken them and then regretted his action, or because his circumstances did not help him, or because he came at a later time .than them

An example of regret for forsaking al-Husayn in lamentation poetry is contained in the poem of Ubayd Allah ibn al-Hurr al-Ju'fi. He said: 'A treacherous commander and a treacherous son ask: 'Haven't you killed al-Husayn ibn Fatima?' My soul is full of blame because I deserted him and gave my pledge of allegiance to this man who breaks his .covenant

O how I regret that I did not help him. No soul can make up that regret. I am full of '.grief because I was not one of his defenders. That will stay with me even if I leave

Verses, which illustrate sorrow at not being with al-Husayn because circumstance did not help the situation, are those of al-'Awf al-Azdi, one of the repentant (tawwabun) who took part in the revolt to gain vengeance for

.the blood of al-Husayn: 'Would that I had been present with him at that time

I would have defended him by striking against his hateful enemies. I would have defended him for as long as I was able to fight. I would have used my sword against '.them

Mansur al-Numayri provides an example of a poet expressing regret that he lived too late to be of assistance. He wishes that he had been here with his hand on his sword. He would have offered himself to death against the swords and never forsaken al-Husayn and his family.

Al-Sharif al-Radi declares: 'Even though I was absent in time from supporting you with '.the sword, I have not been absent with my mouth

Al-Sharif al-Radi has another idea with regard to this theme in some of his poetry. He considers that the opportunity of supporting al-Husayn with the sword did not escape him because he lived too late to be at the Battle of Karbala '. He can help al-Husayn .with the sword by taking vengeance for him and realizing the aims of his revolution

This is a matter which was still possible during his own time but obstacles and impediments prevented it from being attained. He hoped that these obstacles would be removed so that he could achieve his ambition. There is no doubt that al-Sharif al-Radi is there alluding to his ambition to take control of the caliphate and make it an 'Alid caliphate instead of it continuing as an 'Abbasid one. He repeats

.this idea in a number of poems

Most poets, throughout the ages, conclude their poems of lament by declaring that they are sorry that they missed the opportunity of giving support with their hand and .are limited to giving support with their tongue

* * *

This is an outline of the themes of the poetry of lament for al-Husayn. We have presented it in order to make both the scholar and the reader aware of the basic .ideas in this vast poetic inheritance prior to the modern period

## V. The Value Of The Poetry About Al–Husayn

### point

If we considered the poetry of lament for al-Husayn as an artistic work, we would come to a judgment about it which would differ from our judgment of it if we were .considering it for its educational value

The artistic value of the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn does not correspond in any absolute way with its vast size. While the poetry of the first three centuries includes many outstanding pieces, the situation is different from this from the third century onwards insofar as artificiality and weakness of expression began to prevail in this .kind of poetry

Most of it lacks imagination and artistic expression. Much of it might be considered rhymed prose, as if the poet has put one of the books about the death of al-Husayn into rhyme with the addition of some books about the virtues of al-Husayn. Similarly .much of it is identical in expressions and images

This does not mean that during this long period there were not some excellent and outstanding

works in the poetry of lament for al-Husayn. There is no doubt that the scholar will find many like the poems of lament by al-Sharif al-Radi and Mihyar al-Daylami.

However, we are discussing the general impression of this poetry after the third century of the hijra until the beginnings of the modern period. There can be no doubt that its vast quantity in no way corresponds with its qualitative value as a work of art.

We consider that the responsibility for this weakness of quality in the artistic aspect of this poetry of lament for al-Husayn is due to a number of reasons

### The first reason

During this period, this poetry came under the influence of the general cultural situation. The Arabic language had become weak; literature and the sciences had fallen into decay. The idea prevailed over men of culture that they should preserve the models of the ancients without them having the linguistic and artistic resources to enable them even to copy them.

The language of poetry declined until the colloquial almost prevailed over it. During this period the poetry of lamentation was affected by the same tendencies which affected the rest of the poetry.

### The second reason

Most of the poets of lamentation poetry for al-Husayn in this period, or at least many of them, were not poets at all; they were religious scholars or men trained in religious scholarship. Their poetic and artistic culture did not go beyond a knowledge of the poetic metres. Thus they were dealing with a subject which needed an artistic

spirit which most of them lacked, and which needed an artistic culture which most of them lacked.

They used to compose poetry about al-Husayn with the motive of it being a work of piety. In this way you will not find any poem by them about any subject other than al-Husayn and the virtues of the Holy Family, seemingly written in response to the directives from the Imams of the Holy Family about writing poetry, which we discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

Many of these poets, then, did not have the artistic competence to compose a poetic work of art, even by the standards of the poets of their own age whose own poetry did not enjoy any real artistic value. We can, thus, assume that many of them were writing poetry in lamentation and praise of al-Husayn and the Holy Family with a mentality better attuned to writing about syntax, or grammar, or jurisprudence, or the other subjects which were put into rajaz verse so widely during that period.

### The third reason: The profusion of verses in lament for al-Husayn

In this long period which we are discussing in terms of the value of its lamentation poetry, there were many poets who had restricted their poetic composition to the subject of lament for al-Husayn and praise for the Holy Family and they did not go beyond that to anything else.

There were poets who had written dozens of poems in lament for al-Husayn and dozens of poems in praise of the Commander of the faithful and the other Imams. There is

no doubt that this profusion, when added to the weakness of poetic culture and the decline of the literary language at that period, was responsible for the artistic .weakness of the poetry, both in form and content

These, then, are the causes which we consider to have been responsible for the poor .artistic value of the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn during this long period

We say this in the knowledge that we have only studied examples of each of the poets of this period, which we consider to be sufficient to make a judgment about the poetry of the poets which we have not been able to study. This has brought us to the view that a comprehensive study of all the lamentation poetry would lead a scholar to a .similar judgment about the artistic benefit of lamentation poetry in this period

However, the poetry of lament for al-Husayn throughout the ages is a subject rich in possibilities, which is suitable for a variety of types of research which could deal with it from the artistic aspect, for its historical evidence, and from the viewpoint of doctrine, .psychology and sociology

We have already given our estimation of the artistic aspect of lamentation poetry for al-Husayn. However, its educational value differs greatly from its artistic value. The educational value of the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn is real, important and of .decisive influence

This poetry continued its educational task of guidance which had been intended for it when the Imams of the Holy Family directed their

p: ۲۱۵

.Shi'a to compose and recite it

Throughout the different Islamic epochs, it has shared with the other cultural currents, the pilgrimage (ziyara) and the rites of remembrance, in nourishing the Shi'ite individual with the basic concepts of the attitudes and great ideas of Shi'ism and in strengthening the relationship of the Shi'ite individual with the revolution of al-Husayn.

The weak artistic value of much of this poetry in the periods of Islamic decline did not affect its educational role. Perhaps, it even helped it to carry out its role with greater success. Most of this poetry was composed to be recited at the rites of remembrance .for al-Husayn, which were attended by the ordinary people

These were, in most cases, illiterate and incapable, by virtue of their linguistic paucity and their own colloquial language, of understanding complicated artistic expressions and rhetorical images which needed an artistic culture which was not available to the vast majority of them. For this reason, simple speech close to their own colloquial language and with a musical beat was more in tune with their understanding and .more influential on them

Thus, this poetry-with its concepts, ideals and morals- became part of the culture of the ordinary Shi'ite individual and then part of his intellectual fabric. The rituals of 'Ashura' every year in the month Muharram and the gatherings for the rites of remembrance in other days during the year provided an opportunity for thousands of men and women to attend meetings in honour of al-Husayn and to hear

.the story of the battle and the history of Islam

Much of this poetry recited by the mourners was intermingled with all this. Then at a later period, the preachers from the pulpit for al-Husayn became involved with it as .well

The educational value of the lamentation poetry for al-Husayn was important in the past and it will continue to be so in the future for as long as there is the pulpit for al-Husayn. The techniques of modern equipment are the channels which take this poetry to the people and renew for them their relationship with the revolution of al-Husayn and its ideal. They fix it in their hearts and minds as a living symbol of the .struggle to attain truth and justice and of martyrdom for the common good

## Rites of Remembrance for al-Husayn

### I. Funeral And Remembrance Rites For Al-Husayn Held By The Family And Spontaneously By The People

#### Introduction .۱

There is no doubt that the atrocities committed at Karbala' reached their brutal climax with the death of al-Husayn as a martyr in the afternoon of ۱۰th Muharram in the year ۶۱. It led to the performance of funeral and remembrance rites by the surviving family .at Karbala' and in the houses of the Hashimites in Medina and elsewhere

The savage execution of vengeance, as represented by taking the families of the martyrs into captivity, among them were the 'Alid women, by driving the column of prisoners from Karbala' to Kufa, and then from Kufa to Syria, and by accompanying them with the heads of the martyrs, carried on spears and hung round the necks of horse, including

the head of Imam al-Husayn ... this savage execution of vengeance led to spontaneous funeral and remembrance rites being performed in the towns and among other groups of people, through which the procession of prisoners and heads passed, as the inhabitants gathered, whether drawn to find out about it by curiosity or drawn to meet it by earlier information about the nature of the procession which was .coming

When the people met the procession of prisoners, words would be exchanged and some of the Holy Family would make speeches which would arouse great sorrow and .cause much weeping

### The Funeral And Remembrance Rites Of The Family .۲

#### a) At Karbala

There is no doubt that Karbala' witnessed the first funeral and remembrance for al-Husayn which took place immediately after his martyrdom. These must have been rites which were predominantly of a family nature, made up of the women and young girls from the family of 'Ali, wives, daughters and sisters of Imam al-Husayn and the .Hashimites from the Talibid part of the family, who had been martyred with him

In the nature of the situation, they would also have been joined by the wives of the martyrs who were not Hashimites. However, the latter's numbers appear small in (proportion to the number of 'Alid women.(۱

We consider that these funeral and remembrance rites lasted a relatively long time. As far as we can estimate, they began after the death of al-Husayn as a martyr after mid-day on ۱۰th Muharram, continued throughout the night and ended in a distressing way in the afternoon of ۱۱th



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Cf. Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al Mahmum, where he mentiond that the number of - ۱ women from the families of al Husayn and his followers was twenty. There is no early

.text with regards to this issue

Muharram. That was when the leaders of the Umayyad army gave the orders for the .long sad journey to Syria and prepared the camels to carry the prisoners

The hearts of those grief-stricken women and girls must have been torn asunder with torment and distress. They were being told to depart and leave behind the bodies of their beloved and blessed dead which had been thrown on the sand without being .buried

Umar ibn Sa'd had buried his own dead but he showed no concern about burying the' martyrs. On the contrary, he ordered that the body of al-Husayn should be trampled .on by horses' hooves

For this reason, we are inclined to accept the reports which tell of some of the soldiers and leaders in the Umayyad army using violence to separate some of the women from the bodies of their dead. Among these is the report about Sakina, daughter of .Imam al-Husayn

She had embraced the body of her father and would not leave it until a number of bedouin Arabs gathered round her and pulled her away from it.(۱) Indeed we are inclined to accept the general evidence for these kinds of reports because the nature .of things seems to require the reality of what they tell

We consider that these funeral and remembrance rites were held, for the most part, in the open air on the field of battle (after the burning of the tents?)(۲) under the sun as it shone over them for the rest of ۱۰th Muharram, then



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۱- Ibn Tawus, al-Luhuf, ۵۶

۲- Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, pp. ۵۸-۹, this issue needs confirmation.

under the frail light of the stars of that night which was weighed down by the grief of .those women whose hearts were overflowing with torment and distress

The Hashimite women and the others must have been tormented with worry about the begrimed bodies of the martyrs in the sand as they mourned and wept for them. We think that the greatest mourning must have taken place around the body of al-.Husayn

These were certainly funeral and remembrance rites which took place in the most dreadful and distressing situation, from which rose the quivering keening of these women, far from home with their children. They were thirsty, hungry and terrified at .the sight of their husbands, sons, fathers and brothers Iying dead

#### b) In Damascus

The halls of the palace of al-Khadra' in Syria witnessed the second occasion for the family's rites of remembrance. It would have been appropriate if Syria had witnessed general spontaneous rites of remembrance as occurred in Kufa when the party of .prisoners arrived there

However, we only consider what took place in Syria to have been private family rites of remembrance. As we see it, there were no general rites of remembrance in Syria because of the difference in the relationship with the Holy Family between the Kufans .and the Syrians

The Kufans had lived side by side with Imam 'Ali and his sons for several years during the period when Imam 'Ali was the caliph in Kufa which was the capital of the state .during his period in office

Later the leaders of Kufa had sent to Imam al-Husayn asking him to come and .promising to give him support

On the other hand, the Syrians had no direct contact with the Holy Family. Perhaps, they were not aware of their existence as a result of the policy of isolation which Mu'awiya had imposed on them so that they should not be influenced by the culture of (the Iraqis or anyone else in this matter.(١

It seems that, at that time, the coming of the prisoners did not arouse any sadness in the hearts of the Syrian people, nor did the Syrians show any concern. Some of the sources, even, say that the occasion was made into a festival in Damascus, perhaps under the slogan that some of the enemies of the state from the Kharijites had been .killed

Yet even though the coming of the column of prisoners and the heads to Syria did not arouse any rites of remembrance to fill the streets and public squares as had happened in Kufa, great rites of remembrance were held in the halls of the palaces of the caliphate in Damascus which were made up of women from the family of 'Ali and .women of the Umayyad family

#### c) In Medina

Shaykh al-Mufid has reported in Irshad that Yazid ibn Mu'awiya dispatched 'Abd al-Malik ibn Abi al-Harith al-Sulami to Medina to take the news of the death of al-Husayn to his governor there. 'Abd al-Malik reported: 'When I went to 'Amr b. Sa'id b. al-'As, ,he asked



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١- Among the evidence for this at a slightly later period than this is the fact that 'Abd al Malik ibn Marwan stopped the Syrains from making pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca when Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr took control of Hijaz and named himself Caliph. 'Abd al Malik ordered his brother, who was governer of Egypt to stop the people from going to Mecca for pilgrimage (hajj), to perform the ceremonies of Arafa in Egypt and make

the solemn wait (wuquf) at Arafa with them in Egypt in the Day of Arafa. Abd al-Malik also built the Dome of the Rock and al Aqsa Mosque for the people so that he could keep them away from the pilgrimage (hajj) and the lesser pilgrimage (umra) to Mecca. They began to circumambulate the Dome of the Rock in the same way as the circumambulated the Kaba and to sacrifice their sacrificial animal on the day of sacrifice. Cf. Ibn Taghri Birdi, al-Nujum al-Zahira, I, ١٨٨. There is no doubt that Abd al-Malik intended by that to isolate the Syrians and the Egyptians from being exposed to the Shi'ites so that he could keep them away from any outsider who might effect their allegiance to the Umayyad State. Abd al-Malik by that action was carrying out an old policy of the state as represented by Mu'awiya's last advice to his son, Yazid, that he should bring the Syrians back to their land whenever he had to send them on an .expedition, so that they would not be changed by other people's behaviour

What is your news?" "Something which will please the governor," I replied. "Al-" ".Husayn ibn 'Ali has been killed

He ordered me to go out and announce the news of his death. I announced it and I have never heard such wailing of the Hashimites in the houses for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali '.when they heard the announcement of his death

There is no doubt that when the men and women of the Talibid family learnt of the end of al-Husayn and his family at Karbala ', they held rites of remembrance in their .houses, in the streets and in the public squares as the reports suggest

Umm Luqman Zaynab bint 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib came out with her sister when she heard the news of the death of al-Husayn to weep for their dead on the Bank of the :Euphrates. She was reciting

What will you say if the Prophet asks you: "What have you, the last umma, done'

With my offspring and my family after I left them? Some of them are prisoners and .some of them lie killed, stained with blood

What sort of reward to me is this after I had advised you, that you should oppose me '?by doing evil to my family

After the arrival of the news of the dreadful event in Medina, the Talibids began rites of remembrance which continued and reached their climax with the arrival of the sad .party in Medina

There were rites of remembrance which were carried out by the men and there were rites

.of remembrance which were carried out by the women

The men and women of Medina must also have attended these rites of remembrance, consoling, indignant and showing how they shared with the Talibids in .their painful tragedy

We consider that the rites of remembrance held by the men used to begin with expressions of condolence. After that the stories of the battle and its circumstances would be told. These stories would be full of cries for vengeance against the Umayyads and their followers. History has preserved for us a picture of rites of remembrance held by men. These were the rites of remembrance for 'Abd Allah ibn .Ja'far

The rites of remembrance of the women would have been more heated and emotional as is the nature of the case. Some of them would have been held in the houses and some would have been held in the cemetery of al-Baqi'. The Medinan women would have attended these rites of remembrances. Perhaps, even some of .the men attended them as well, as may be deduced from some reports

In our view the rites of remembrance of the Talibid women would have included an account of the battle in emotional language and an explanation of the great virtues of the martyrs. That would be permeated with a wailing kind of poetry. It may also have .been accompanied by the beating of faee and breasts

We believe that the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn carried out by women have .preserved their basic characteristics through the ages

No change worth mentioning has been introduced into them other than the language of the wailing kind of poetry and of the story of the battle. Certainly this language has .changed insofar as it was classical and it has become colloquial or almost colloquial

History has preserved a picture of some of these family rites of remembrance held by :the women

Umm Banin -and she is Fatima bint Hizam al-Kilabiyya, the mother of al-'Abbas and' his brothers, Abd Allah, Ja'far and 'Uthman, who were killed with their brother, al-Husayn on the Day of 'Ashura' -used to go every day to the cemetery of al-Baqi', .carrying ' Ubayd Allah, the child of her son, al-'Abbas

She would mourn for her four sons with the deepest and most tormented grief. The people would gather and listen to her grieving. Marwan ibn al-Hakam used to come with those who came for that purpose and he would continue to listen to her grief as (he wept.'(١

Then there were the rites of remembrance of al-Rabab, the wife of al-Husayn. However the greatest of the family rites of remembrance held by the women was undoubtedly the rites which Zaynab, daughter of 'Ali, held. They were solemn rites .under the leadership of Zaynab

These rites and the anti-Umayyad reactions they generated in Medina prompted the governor of Medina, 'Amr ibn Sa'id ibn al-'As to write to Yazid ibn Mu'awiya: 'The presence of Zaynab among the people of Medina is inflammatory. She is eloquent, clever, intelligent. She and those with



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١- al Tabari, op cit, V

'.her are determined to take vengeance for the death of al-Husayn

This led to her being taken away from Medina and sent to Egypt where she died on .۱۴th Rajab in the year ۶۲

### The General Rites Of Remembrance Which Occurred Spontaneously .۳

#### point

We mean by the rites of remembrance which occurred spontaneously, those gatherings which took place as the column of prisoners and heads passed through the towns and scattered groups of people on its journey from Karbala ' to Kufa, then to Syria, and from there to Medina where the greatest of the spontaneous rites of .remembrance was held

In our view, these rites of remembrance took place in many of the places inhabited by people who recognised the postion of the Holy Family in Islam and had been able to get to know something of what had taken place at Karbala'. We will mention here two .outstanding examples of these rites of remembrance

They were the rites of remembrance which took place in Kufa while the prisoners were about to set out for Syria and those which took place in Medina at the end of the journey of the revolution after the return of the rest of the Prophet's family from .'Karbala

#### a) In Kufa

When the column of prisoners with the heads of the martyrs arrived in Kufa they were .'met by what could now be termed 'a popular reception

Throughout the weeks of tribulation Kufa had been living on its nerves. The beginning had been represented by Muslim ibn' Aqil with his extraordinary success and then his dreadful end. It had watched

the army being despatched to Karbala.'

It had suffered the pains and oppression of the martial law which dominated it during the weeks of tribulation. Now it had to come to see the result of the treachery by its leaders, the desertion by its inhabitants and the tyranny of its rulers.

Kufa met the women of the Prophet's family who expressed their bitterness and their misfortune in speeches which they addressed to the groups of people who had come to meet them. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin 'Ali ibn al-Husayn spoke to them in a similar way.

The historians have described the effect which these speeches had on the people. They have mentioned the effect of the speech of Imam'Ali ibn al-Husayn: '... The voices of the people were raised in weeping from every side. Some were saying to others "You have been destroyed while you did not understand".'

As for the effect of the speech of Zaynab, they have reported: 'Someone who heard it said: "By God, I have never seen a diffident lady speak more eloquently than her. It was as if she had borrowed the tongue of the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib.

By God, she had not finished speaking before the people were in a turmoil of weeping. They became utterly distracted with grief and dropped whatever they were holding at the horror of this black tribulation".'

The historians report about the effect of Umm Kulthum's speech with the words: 'The people were in a turmoil of weeping and

lamentation. The women loosened their hair and covered their faces with dust. They scratched their faces and struck their cheeks. They prayed for woe and destruction. The men wept. I have never seen more men and women weeping than I saw on that '.day

Of the effect of the speech of the young Fatima, they said, '... A little before the end of her speech, the Kufans raised their voices in weeping and lamentation. They said: "Enough, O Daughter of the best of men. Our hearts have become enflamed and our '.bodies have been set on fire." So she fell silent

#### b) In Medina

When the sad party of the Holy Family were approaching the hills of Medina, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin asked Bashir to go ahead into Medina to announce al-Husayn's death and tell the people of the arrival of the Holy Family. Bashir reported: 'I mounted my horse and galloped into Medina. When I reached the Mosque of the Prophet, I raised my voice and recited: "People of Medina, you have no replacement there now that al-.Husayn has been killed

So weep profusely. His body was dyed red with blood at Karbala ' and his head was swung around on the shaft of a spear. Here is coming 'Ali ibn al-Husayn with his aunts and sisters. They have reached your suburbs and have stopped there. I am his '".messenger to you to tell you where he is

Medina already knew about what had happened at Karbala' after 'Ubayd Allah ibn .Ziyad's messenger brought the news

The family rites of remembrance had been going on in the houses of the Talibid family which were full of people bringing their condolences and discussing the news of Karbala'. Here was what was left of the slaughter of Karbala' by the Umayyad sword, returning to their home draped in the cloth of sadness, with bleeding hearts and .tearful eyes

:Bashir ibn Jadhlam described the scene

There was not a woman who normally stayed in seclusion nor a woman who kept' herself veiled who did not show her face as they were all calling for woe and affliction. Everybody in Medina came out making a great turmoil of weeping. I have never seen more people weeping than I saw on that day. Nor have I seen a more bitter day for '.the Muslims than it except for the death of the Apostle of God

:Bashir ibn Jadhlam continued

I whipped my horses and began to return. I found that the people were already' taking to the roads and streets ... 'Ali ibn al-Husayn was entering ... He had come holding a cloth with which he wiped away his tears. Behind him, his servant had a chair which he put down for him. He sat down upon it while still not being able to control his tears. On all sides the voices of the people were raised in weeping as they tried to console him. The place was in a great turmoil. He made a sign with his hand for them to be quiet and

their uproar subsided. Then he made an emotional speech to them. Then he went into '... Medina

In this way the whole of Medina was transformed, after the arrival of the Holy Family from Karbala', into one great rite of remembrance which was nourished with emotional agitation by the very centre of sadness and tragedy, the houses of the Talibid family, with the family of Imam al-Husayn at their fore. This transformed their .family rites of remembrance into the greatest lamentations

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These spontaneous and overflowing rites of remembrance, which were held in Kufa and Medina and at the stopping-places along the route in the journey of return from Karbala ', carry within them the seeds of the public rites of remembrance as an .institution

This is so because those who participated in them only did so as people involved in the matter who claimed that the cause of al-Husayn was Islamic, not something which only belonged especially to one family, that is the Hashimites and the Talibids. Perhaps, even the family rites of remembrance performed at Karbala', Damascus and Medina also participated, in some way, in preparing the atmosphere appropriate for .the growth of the foundation of the concept of the public rites of remembrance

## II. The Public Rites of Remembrance for Al-Husayn

The revolution of al-Husayn was a tremendous event which sent a convulsion through the whole of Islamic society, breaking down the false calmness and the silence which had wrapped itself around it. It made Islamic society think again about its view of many of its political

conventions and it gave rise to a movement of self-criticism which was awakened in .men's consciences

The soldiers returned to their towns and their tribes with the news of the horror, which they had seen and helped to commit, and of the terrible end that came to revolutionaries. Along the roads from Karbala' to Kufa, Syria and Medina, the people saw the column of prisoners and the heads of the martyrs. They were affected emotionally by the spontaneous rites of remembrance and those of the family which .took place at different places

The spontaneous effect of the revolution, together with the profound grief and extreme distress which it aroused, must have given the people, who knew about what happened, an excuse for gathering together, a subject of conversation, and an incentive to re-examine their attitudes and opinions and to review their position with .regard to the whole system

What had happened was on such a great scale and of such importance that it was impossible to ignore it. What had happened was an Islamic revolution, in which many of the men, who led it and were martyred in it, were at the very peak of Islamic .society, the foremost of them being Imam al-Husayn

The gatherings of people, which the emotional effect of the tragedy and the effect of the rites of remembrance, whether of the family or spontaneous, brought about, are, in our view, the core from which the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn as an institution began and developed during the

.course of history

The remembrance rites for al-Husayn began immediately after the end of the revolution and news of it had spread in Islamic society. They began, however, in a .spontaneous and simple way

Small groups of indignant Muslims, both followers of the Holy Family and others, used to hold meetings in a house of one of them, in a mosque, in a street, or in an open square. They would speak about al-Husayn, his followers and his family and what had happened to them; they would criticise the authorities who had attacked him and their legal extension as represented by the governor in the area; they would renounce them; and sometimes they would recite some poetry of lament which had .been composed about the revolution, its hero and its dead

Through the ages, these rites of remembrance developed and passed through various stages until they reached the present form in which they are held today. We will examine these stages later. For the present, we want to explain the factors which led to these spontaneous gatherings being transformed into a cultural and sociological institution which has incomparable influence, namely the rites of .remembrance for al-Husayn

In our opinion, the Imams of the Holy Family are the ones who induced these spontaneous gatherings to go in this direction and change into an institution with .customs and traditional practices

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The earliest sources, which we believe prompted these groupings to become the cultural institution of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, refer to a very

early period after the revolution, I mean after the month of Muharram in the year ۶۱.

These texts have been reported from Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin (۳۸-۹۵). He had been present in the revolution with his father, Imam al-Husayn, from its beginning until its terrible end and he had tasted the bitterness of being taken prisoner with his aunts and sisters and the other women of the Holy Family.

In these texts Imam Zayn al-'Abidin explains the reward to be gained by anyone who wept for the tragic fate of al-Husayn. One such text is the following:

Whatever believer's eyes shed tears for the death of al-Husayn until they flow over his cheeks, will be provided by God, as a consequence, with rooms in Paradise which he will inhabit for a long time. Whatever believers eyes shed tears until they flow over his cheeks because of the grievous harm inflicted upon us by our enemies in this world, will be provided by God, as a consequence, with a true abode in Paradise.(۱)

We consider that this explanation, and others like it, gave a specific direction to these spontaneous gatherings which were being held after the end of the revolution. This direction was based on the following idea: A constant reason for these gatherings would be easily achieved when there was a special meeting to discuss and study a tragedy which was overflowing with reasons for weeping.(۲)

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In the time of Imam Abu Ja'far Muhammad al-Baqir, the son of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin



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۱- Ibn Qawlawayh, op cit, ۱۰۳-۴

۲- These texts concern us here as being a justification and incentive for a meeting for the purpose of weeping. We will study them from another angle in the coming discussion of the phenomenon of weeping, itself.

or ۱۱۷), who was present at Karbala' with his father when he was four years ۵۷-۱۱۴) old, he issued a directive which gave a definite form to keeping the memory of al-Husayn alive at an appointed time each year, ۱۰th Muharram, the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar.

This form consisted of two practices: (a) The pilgrimage (ziyara) should be made to al-Husayn on the day of 'Ashura' for those whose houses were near the grave of al-Husayn; otherwise pilgrimage rites should be held at home for those who lived 'so far away that they could not make the journey there on that day.' (b) People should gather together and weep.

Imam al-Baqir said in connection with the man who is too far away to make the pilgrimage:

Then let him mourn and weep for al-Husayn. Let him order those in his house to weep for him. Let him celebrate the tragedy in his house by showing anguish for him. Let people meet together to weep in their houses for al-Husayn. Let them console each other for what befell al-Husayn ibn 'Ali.

Malik al-Juhni asked him, 'How should they console each other?' He answered:

Let them say:

May God increase our rewards as a result of what has befallen us through al-Husayn's sufferings. May God make both you and us men who seek vengeance for him together with His great saint (wali), the Imam, the Mahdi from the family of Muhammad.(۱)

We are here faced with a clear directive for a gathering which was aimed at



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۱- Ibn Qawlawayh, op cit, ۱۷۴-۵. A similar tradition is given by al-Tusi in Misbah al-Mutahajjid with a chain of authorities (isnad) going back to Imam Muhammad al-Baqir.

a defined objective, namely to keep the memory of al-Husayn alive. It has also been given a personal dimension with the words ... 'May God increase our rewards.' Thus the tragedy of al-Husayn is not just the special concern of his family. It is something of .general concern which is connected with everyone who loves the Holy Family

Here, we should draw attention to the directive made about what the man who is far away from Karbala ' on the Day of 'Ashura ' should do. It indicates he should provide himself with a substitute ritual for what was taking place at the grave of al-Husayn on .'the Day of 'Ashura

In the time of Imam al-Baqir, the great rites of remembrance were held at the grave of al-Husayn in the way which has been recorded in the directive. Those who were unable to come to Karbala' held their own rites of remembrance in their houses and in .their quarters

Since this directive was specially concerned with what the Shi'ite should do on the Day of 'Ashura', there is also another report which has come from Imam al-Baqir in which there is a general directive about gathering and remembering the situation of the :Holy Family, which is not limited to a specific time

May God have mercy on a man who meets with another in order to remember our situation. There will be a third person with them who will be an angel who will seek forgiveness for them. Two people shall never

meet to remember us without God making them sincerely proud through the .presence of an angel

If you gather together and occupy yourselves in remembering us, then our memory will be kept alive in your meetings and in your remembrances. The best of people .after us are those who remember our situation and urge others to remember us

This test illustrates that the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in the time of Imam al-Baqir had begun to take on the form of an institution with a purpose, whose activity was not subject to any specific limitation concerned with time. Rather, it was spreading both in time and place and developing, through being performed, its own .customs and techniques

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From the sources, it appears that by the time of Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq (۸۰ or ۸۳-۱۴۸), the gatherings devoted to the memory of the Holy Family and their tragedies, and the foremost of them, the tragedy of Imam al-Husayn, had become .well-known in Shi'ite circles

It is reported that Imam al-Sadiq said to al-Fudayl ibn Yasar, 'Al-Fudayl, do you sit together and talk?' 'Yes,' replied al-Fudayl.' The Imam then commented, 'Al-Fudayl, I love these gatherings. Keep the memory of our situation alive. God will have mercy on (a man who keeps the memory of our situation alive.'(۱

We have already seen many texts which have been reported from Imam al-Sadiq urging the composition of poetry about al-Husayn and explaining the great reward that will come to anyone who makes fifty or ten



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Ibn Qawlawayh, op cit, ۱۰۴-۶ -۱

or five ... people weep through his recitation of such poetry. Such texts contributed greatly to the motivation of people gathering for this purpose. This kind of recitation required people to gather. Whenever the gatherings increased in size, the impulses to .weep increased

It seems that the recitation of poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn had developed during this period and a special style arose in it which was rather like wailing, or was even wailing itself. It was not merely the chanting or recitation of poetry. Elements of voice-production had begun to be introduced which increased its emotional and psychological effect. The words of Imam al-Sadiq to Abu Harun al-Makfuf, when the .latter recited him one of the poems of lament for al-Husayn, illustrate this point

Abu Harun reported: Imam al-Sadiq said to me, 'Abu Harun, recite to me about al-Husayn.' I recited and he wept. Then he said, 'Recite as you were reciting.' He meant :with emotion. So I recited

.Pass the grave of al-Husayn and speak of his great purity

(He wept ...(۱

Furthermore, it seems that in this period the development of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn had acquired another characteristic, that is, it made men and women devote themselves to composing poetry of lament for al-Husayn and they made the style of wailing a special feature of this kind of poetry. Such a person was Abu Harun whom we have just mentioned. Another of them was Abu ' Umara, the (reciter.(۲

Alongside the reciters of poetry, who used to use the



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Ibid -۱

Ibid, ۱۰۵-۶, Imam Jafar al Sadiq used to ask him to recite poetry of Sufyan ibn - ۲ (Mus'ab al-'Abdi (d. ۱۲۰ or ۱۷۸

special form of wailing, we find another group of men who participated in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn at this period. They are the story-tellers.

Story-tellers had existed since the time of ' Uthman ibn 'Affan. It appears that their function was in the gatherings in the mosque after the salat. There they would tell stories about the wars of conquest, the life of the Prophet and the virtues of the Companions of the Prophet and they would give sermons of encouragement and warning. Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan employed this group to spread his propaganda among the ordinary people.(۱)

After becoming a growing institution which attracted increasing numbers of people, the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn seemed to have come within the interest of the story-tellers, or they created special story-tellers of their own.

An indication of this comes in an account reported from Imam al-Sadiq which describes the state of the people at the grave of al-Husayn during the night of ۱۵th Sha'ban. It shows that by this period there had developed story-tellers who were introducing the life of al-Husayn into their stories, or even limited their stories to it.

Imam al-Sadiq says: 'I have learnt that people are going to the tomb of al-Husayn from the regions around Kufa as well as other people and women who mourn for him. This is on ۱۵th Sha'ban. Among them are reciters who recite, story-tellers who tell his story, mourners who mourn ....'(۲)

These reciters, mourners and story-tellers seem to be the early predecessors

p: ۲۳۷

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۱- Cf. Thawrat al-Husayn: Zurufuha ... op cit, ۹۰

۲- Ibn Qawlawayh, op cit, ۳۲۵-۶. This reveals that the Shi'ite leadership was using the same means as the authorities had been using to spread their propaganda among the people.

of the preachers from the pulpit of al-Husayn who have made their vocation preaching on the occasions of rites of remembrance for al-Husayn throughout the .year

We will return to the discussion of this subject later in this chapter when we deal with .the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

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During the time of Ja'far al-Sadiq, the Shi'a derived some benefit from the fall of the Umayyad regime and the founding of the 'Abbasid state insofar as the Umayyads were occupied in fighting the wars which the 'Abbasids and their propagandists .instigated against them

The 'Abbasids, in turn, had taken control of the government using the slogan that they were members of the Prophet's family (ahl al-bayt). Therefore it would not have been regarded as natural by the people for them to harrass Imam al-Sadiq, the most .illustrious member of the Prophet's family (ahl al-bayt) in the eyes of the Muslims

In addition to this, the 'Abbasids were distracted from close observations of Imam al-Sadiq and the Shi'a of the Holy Family by trying to set up their state, on the one hand, .and by fighting the Umayyads and destroying their bases, on the other hand

Imam al-Sadiq and the Shi'a enjoyed a great deal of freedom during this period. There were numerous directives and instructions issued by the Imam so that he would complete the structure of Shi' ism. There were also many gatherings of the Shi'a, and they developed their cultural institutions, in particular the institutions of

.(the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and the pilgrimage (ziyara

However, Abu Ja'far Mansur brought this activity to an end when he pursued the Shi'a and the members of the 'Alid family with death and banishment. This was one of the .reasons which compelled them to restrict their activities and keep them secret

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The Imams of the Holy Family contined their concern for the institution of the rites of remembrance which they showed concern for by support and directives. They personally used to meet the poets and reciters and used to hold special gatherings to listen to their poetry and recitations. Their womenfolk and their special followers .would attend these gatherings

The Imams had showed their great concern for these meetings with the poets at an early period, the time of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, and then after that at the time of .his son, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq

Among the outstanding people at these meetings was al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadi (۶۰-۱۲۰). He had gone to see Imam al-Baqir and meet him in Medina. He recited to him .an ode about his love for the Hashimites

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq met the poet Ja'far ibn 'Affan al-Ta'i and asked him to recite a .poem of lamentation for al-Husayn

Al-Sayyid al-Himyari, Isma'il ibn Muhammad (۱۰۵-۱۷۳ or ۱۷۸), was another poet who :met Imam al-Sadiq and recited him his ode which begins

.(Pass the grave of al-Husayn and speak of his great purity(۱

Di'bil ibn 'Ali al-Khuza'i was a poet whom Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida met in Khurasan. He recited



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.Cf. Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani, al-Aghani -۱

:one of his odes to the Imam

Schools of verses of the Qur'an are without recitation and the place of revelation is (like courtyards empty of people.(۱

.There were many others besides these

Alongside this direct activity of meeting poets and performing the rites of remembrance in their houses, the Imams of the Holy Family persevered in their efforts to direct the Shi'a to hold gatherings and meetings in order to keep alive the .memory of the Holy Family and especially of al-Husayn

However, the Shi'a did not enjoy for long the relative freedom which had been afforded to them during the period of Imam al-Sadiq, as we alluded to earlier. The period of his son, the seventh Imam Musa al-Kazim, was a much blacker period for .the Shi'a

During it they were treated dreadfully by the 'Abbasid authorities as their organsations strove to combat the activities of the Shi'a and to suppress violently their cultural movements, among which, naturally, were the rites of remembrance for .al-Husayn

So violent was the terrorisation which the Shi'a faced from the authorites and their organisations in this period that the Shi'a were compelled to use taqiyya (precautionary dissimulation) on a wide scale in their public lives, in some .circumstances even in their private lives, in order to preserve their physical safety

Imam Musa spent a long period of his life in 'Abbasid prisons, and he died a martyr in .one of the prisons of Baghdad in the year ۱۸۳, during the reign of Harun al-Rashid

However, the Shi'a regained some



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۱- .Cf. Ibid; al-Saduq, al-Amali; al-Mufid, al-Irshad

freedom of movement during the periods of the eighth and ninth Imams, Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (۱۴۸ or ۱۵۳-۲۰۳) and his son, Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad (۱۹۵-۲۲۰). The reign of the 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Ma'mun, was characterised by the relative moderation in the treatment of the Shi'a. The atmosphere of tolerance continued in .the reign of his successor, al-Mu'tasim

Imam al-Rida became heir apparent to al-Ma'mun in ۲۰۱ and his son-in-law through marrying al-Ma'mun's daughter, Umm Habiba. Similarly Imam al-Jawad became al-.Ma'mun's son-in-law by marrying his daughter, Umm al-Fadl

Among the directives of al-Rida concerning the performance of the rites of :remembrance is the following

Whoever remembers our sufferings and weeps for the crimes which have been committed against us, will be within our rank on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever remembers our suffering and weeps and makes others weep, his eyes will not weep on the Day when many eyes will weep. Whoever attends gatherings where our (situation is kept alive, his heart will not die on the day when many hearts will die.(۱

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During the periods of the next three Imams, 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi (b. Medina, ۲۱۲, d. Samarra ', ۲۵۴), al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-'Askari (b. Medina ۲۳۱ or ۲۳۲, d. Samarra' ۲۶۰) and the twelfth Imam, the awaited Mahdi (b. Samarra ' ۲۵۵), the attitude of the .authorities changed

The reign of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil and those who came after him were times of harshness and tyranny in the treatment of the Shi'a and the Imams of



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.Cf. al-Saduq, ‘Uyun Akhbar al-Rida -۱

the Holy Family. The stage saw only some slight relaxations which had little value for the course of events until the Buwayhids gained control over the government in .Baghdad in the first half of the fourth century of the hijra

However the harshness of the rulers like the fanaticism of the general populace which we will examine later could not impede the growth of the institution of the rites of .remembrance for al-Husayn and its continuation in men's consciousness

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn were held secretly during the periods of harshness and persecution. The danger did not affect the enthusiasm of the Shi'a to .'hold these rites constantly, and especially on the Day of'Ashura

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We consider that the correct explanation for the attitude of the Imams of the Holy Family to the problem of keeping alive the memory of al-Husayn through poetry and gatherings of remembrance and urging the people to do that, is found in the fact that keeping alive this memory constantly shows the people the policy which the Imams of .the Holy Family laid down to safeguard and defend Islam

It shows the umma the great sacrifices which they have made for the sake of that. Similarly it reveals the nature, enmity and distance from Islam of the forces which confronted and combatted them. It explains the essence of the struggle between .them and their opponents

It is not personal nor self-interested; it only goes back, in one respect, to the concern of the Imams of

the Holy Family to make every ruler adhere to trust and truth through the application of the principles of Islam in his policies; and, in another respect, it goes back to the contradiction of the personal and family interests of the rulers with the aims of the Imams of the Holy Family in defence of Islam from exploitation and in defence of the Islamic way of life (shari'a) from distortion.

Keeping the memory of the revolution of al-Husayn alive, recalling the incidents involved in it, reviewing its slogans and the slogans of its opponents and examining their behaviour in their lives and their policies towards the umma ... all of this ensures that the corrupt government which exists in any period and in any time will be found guilty because it is the illegal continuation of the government whose distorted conduct led to the revolution and death of al-Husayn.

The texts that we have presented in this section clearly indicate the nature of the objectives and the important issues that the Holy Family wanted to realise through the creation of this institution.

This, in our view, is the real content of the call by the Imams of the Holy Family to keep alive this memory in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and others. As for the emotional content of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, we shall deal with that in another chapter devoted to the discussion of the phenomenon of weeping.

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The Imams of the Holy Family, thus, created the

institution of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. During the earliest Islamic eras, this institution began its activity in a limited form. Some contributory factors strengthened its existence, and these factors gave it additional causes for growth. Its subject matter was enriched with new contents, all of which helped to serve the basic aim of its creation. In the same way, new techniques of expression and practice were .introduced

We will mention, in what follows, three matters which we consider to be among the contributory factors for rooting the institution of the rite of remembrance for al-Husayn firmly in popular consciousness, for enriching it and for giving variety to its .content

۱. There were the revolutions which broke out against the existing govenment as a result of the revival of the spirit of struggle which the revolution of al-Husayn kept .alive

These revolutions raised the slogans of vengeance for al-Husayn in order to arouse and mobilise the people to support them. They made the revolution of al-Husayn a beacon and a slogan. This was an important factor in providing the revolution of al-Husayn with new reasons to live in the hearts and minds of men.

This factor was not just limited to the Umayyad period. It also occurred in the 'Abbasid period in the revolutions of the descendants of al-Hasan and others. It used to appear to the people that it was as if the spirit of Karbala' was the thing which was motivating .the revolutionaries

۲. By virtue of its power to arouse the

emotions, by virtue of its ensuring and publicly declaring the guiltiness of the corrupt government, and by virtue of its direction by the Imams of the Holy Family along this course, the memory of al-Husayn became in many periods one of the means of secret .opposition to the existing government

Under the yoke of a corrupt government, the Shi'ite used to suffer in two ways: (i) He was persecuted and hunted because of his beliefs and his historical attitude. (ii) He learnt from the programme of the Imams of the Holy Family that Islam was an integrated belief and way of life. For this reason he would never accept any .falsification of its truths

The situation in which the Shi'ite lived and his intellectual policy, put him at the centre of opposition. Therefore he needed to express himself and his attitude as an opponent with the caution necessary to provide a minimum of security for himself and .his economic interests

The memory of al-Husayn provided him with the opportunity of carrying out his opposition to the existing government in secret within a relatively safe compass. It also attained for him a psychological ease which grew out of the ideals of the Holy .Family. These shining ideals were guaranteed by the memory of al-Husayn

These were the reactions against the attitude of the tyrannical rulers towards the .۳ .memory and rites of al-Husayn

From the Umayyad period until the present, tyrannical rulers have realised the implictions involved in the holding of gatherings to remember al-Husayn in

terms of the condemnation of their excesses and injustice. Therefore they have attempted to stop them and suppress them.

We find this in the Umayyad period, and we find it in the 'Abbasid period. We find it in the political dynasties which followed the 'Abbasids, where the Shi'a lived.

In previous studies we have given much evidence for government suppression of the Shi'a when they practise, in any way, the rites to keep alive the memory of al-Husayn. Further evidence will be given in future studies.

The memory of al-Husayn, in the pilgrimage and the rites of remembrance, has faced, in most political periods, suppression prohibition and persecution for those who tried to practise them. In the periods of some rulers there have been feeble relaxations in which the Shi'a enjoyed only a limited amount of freedom.

Soon a new period or a new ruler plundered this from them, sometimes preventing them from holding the rites or at other times restricting the rites to keep his memory alive with numerous heavy restrictions. This was done in order to try to empty them of any content critical of the existing regime.

Yet all these acts of repression failed to wipe out the rituals associated with this remembrance. The rites of remembrance and other ceremonies were held secretly on their appropriate occasions even in the most harsh and unjust periods.

One of the things which may be of great evidence in this connection is the fact that stopping rites of remembrance, preventing them from being held or

putting restrictions on the freedom to carry them out in terms of them representing opposition to the government is a policy which even Shi'ite rulers as well as others have followed. In Iraq, Iran and other Islamic countries, when the chief responsibility in the state came into the hands of a Shi'ite ruler, it used to happen that, on some .occasions, he would follow the policy of prohibition or restriction

In this way the situation does not differ from what pertains when the person in chief responsibility in the state is a non-Shi'ite. This confirms that the memory of al-Husayn .is essentially non-sectarian

This attitude by the authorities against the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn has remained constant and still generates a reaction which prompts the Shi'ite to hold on .to them and care for them

The feelings of the Shi'ite with regard to this may have been that the authorities wanted to deprive him of the only refuge, in which he could relieve his emotions of fear and anger and his psychological repression, and during which he could express .his views of the government's attitude and behaviour

* * *

These, in our view, are the contributory factors which helped to strengthen the position of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in popular consciousness and gave it the power to remain firm and contine despite the hostile attitude towards it throughout the centuries. They, also, provided it with the possibilities of development .and renewal generation after generation

These were in addition to the

basic reason for its existence and growth, namely the fact that the Imams of the Holy .Family had directed their Shi'a to develop this great cultural institution

## III. The Stages of the Rites of Remembrance for Al–Husayn

### point

In the nature of the case, when the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn were founded, they did not exist in any already completed way. They were not fixed in a single form in the centuries which followed. They developed and changed during different historical periods and elements were introduced into them which had not .existed in them before

We consider that, from their institution to the present, the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn have passed through three major stages, represented by the historical and cultural epochs through which the Muslims, in general, and the Shi' ites, in particular, .lived

These left their mark on their institutions, including the rites of remembrance. Each of these three major stages, which we will classify, also had changes within so that the .researcher could divide each of these stages into many more stages

The three stages, which we consider the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn to have gone through from the time they began up to the present, are the following: (i) the first stage began shortly after the revolution, i.e. a year after ۶۱, and it continued until the fall of Baghdad at the hands of Hulagu, or shortly before that; (ii) the second stage began at the time of the fall of Baghdad, or shortly before that, and contined through the dark ages of the history of the Muslims

until the modern period; and (iii) the third stage was from the beginnings of the .modern period until the present

These are the stages which we consider that the rites of remembrance have passed .through from their institution until now

We do not have the sources for an exhaustive investigation of the stages, development, fixed content and changing content of the rites of remembrance .throughout its history

In the preface of this book we explained that this study of the revolution of al-Husayn in popular consciousness was a pioneering work insofar as we do not know of any study on the subject before this one. As a result our study suffers from a paucity of .sources which would make it easier

With God's guidance we come to what we consider as the basic source for this study and what we consider as a contributory source to the basic source, in addition to the .general sources of history, civilisation and intellectual development

In our view the basic source is the books about the death of al-Husayn (maqtal). For this reason we will rely on these books in our analysis of the stages, through which the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn passed, and of the content of the rites in each of .those stages

The contributory source is the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn in the different Islamic periods insofar as, in some cases, it reflects the state of the rites of remembrance during that time, even though it lacks relative exactness in portraying the actual situation of

the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn because the personal and subjective element in it dominates the objective factor, which we assume to be the mark of prose writing .in the books about the death of al-Husayn

What made us consider the books about the death of al-Husayn to be a basic source for this study was our knowledge that the writers, both Shi'ite and non-Shi'ite who were closely attached to the Imams of the Holy Family, had written much about the death of al-Husayn. Although some of them had written about this subject in response to a purely scientific motive, we consider that group of writers to be small .and rare

There is no doubt that most writers on this subject wrote in response to two integrated motives. One of these was the motive of religious piety and emotional loyalty to the Holy Family. The second was in response to the people's demand for written material which set out the account of the death of al-Husayn for use in .gatherings and meetings held to keep the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn alive

In view of this, these latter books reflect, with objective truth, the situation of the rites of remembrance during the periods in which they were written, since they are, without any doubt, a mirror of the general view of the rites of remembrance, their .cultural content and the elements which formed this content

In what follows, we will put forward some of the texts from some of the books about the

death of al-Husayn which demonstrates that these books were written in order to be .read at the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

:In the introduction to his book, Muthir al-Ahzan, Ibn Nama al-Hilli (d. ۶۴۵) says

O man of insight and understanding, O man of reason and dreams, behold the watchword of grief. Let grief clothe men of faith. Imitate the Apostle in love for the children of Fatima the fair and pure. O you who love the family of the Apostle, wail like the women bereft of her children wails. Weep with flowing tears for the Imams of .Islam

Perhaps you may give them solace for the tragedy by showing grief and dejection and by declaring your yearning and your lamentation. Make me happy through your wailing and keening. Mourn for him whose death shook the throne of Heaven. Shed ... tears for the man who was killed in a distant land

I was told by my father, may God have mercy upon him, that Imam al-Sadiq said: 'Whoever refers to us at a gathering with the slightest word or whose eyes overflow with a tear, even the amount of the wing of a mosquito, because of compassion '... towards us and sympathy for our tragedy, will have his sins forgiven

I have written this account of the death of al-Husayn as one which is intermediate between the other accounts .... Hearts should delight in the sweetness of its expression. The sleeper will wake from his sleep and dozing. The man who ignores

this tragedy and the man who is forgetful of grief and distress will pay attention .... O listeners, if you missed the honour of giving support and were deprived of fighting against that cavalry, you have not missed the opportunity of letting your tears flow for the noble lords of the family and putting on the watchword of grief for the family ....(١)

Ibn al-Ghuti, in his book, al-Hawadith al-Jami'a, has reported some of the incidents which indicate that the books about the death of al-Husayn were compiled to be read out at the gatherings for the rites of remembrance, from which it can be assumed that it was a common phenomenon and a firm element in the practices of keeping the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn alive. It supports our view for considering the books about the death of al-Husayn as a basic source for our study. He says:

"In the year ۶۴۱, al-Mu'tasim sent to Jamal al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Jawzi, the inspector of public order (muhtasib), to stop the people from reading aloud the account on the death of al-Husayn on the Day of 'Ashura' and reciting it in the rest of the areas beside Baghdad, except at the grave of Musa ibn Ja'far ....(٢)

"In Muharram in the year ۶۴۸, al-Mu'tasim prohibited the people of Kufa and al-Mukhtara from wailing, reciting and reading aloud the account of the death of al-Husayn, out of fear that it would go beyond that into something which would lead to disorder."(٣)

As a result



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١ - Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, ۳-۶. Similar expressions which show what we have mentioned are repeated in the introduction of the book Al-Luhuf fi Qatla al-Tufuf by 'Ali ibn Musa, who is known as Ibn Tawus (d.۶۶۴), and other books about the death of al-Husayn.

۲- Ibn Ghuti, al-Hawadith al-Jami'a, ۱۸۳.

۳- Ibid. ۲۴۸.

of this, in our study of the stages, cultural content and the differing elements of each stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, we will examine the books about the death of al-Husayn in terms of them being representative of the periods in which they were written and therefore representative of the revolution of al-Husayn in popular consciousness in each of those periods. We will also seek the help of the poetry of lamentation for this purpose, alongside the general sources for the history .of civilisation and intellectual development

* * *

In these three stages the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn always included a fixed .element just as changing elements were found in them

This fixed element in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn has been, from its inception right up to the present time, the story of the revolution of al-Husayn with a concentration on the tragic aspect of it: the treachery and betrayal of the Kufans; the extreme oppression of the Umayyads and their rejection of true values; the prevention of water reaching al-Husayn's camp; the thirst of the women, children, fighters and horses which that led to; the conversations between the women and children and al-Husayn and others about the problem of water and thirst; the conversations of al-Husayn with his followers, or his brothers, or his sisters, or the Umayyad army; the insistence of Ibn Ziyad in humiliating al-Husayn and the refusal by the latter and those with him to accept injustice; al-Husayn's call to his family

and followers to leave him and save themselves and their refusal to do that with declarations of their determination to support him until death in very moving words; the martyrdom of his followers and the members of his family and the killing of youths and children; and the rites of remembrance reach their climax with death of al-Husayn together with exact details about the place of his death and about every place .' of death at Karbala

In addition to the story of al-Husayn's revolution, there is within the fixed element .criticism of the authorities when reasons for that criticism exist

In Umayyad and 'Abbasid times, that criticism was often clearly stated because these rites of remembrance were held in secret at that time. The criticism may be through allusions and indirect indications when there are men of the authorities who are .associated with the Shi'a who may cause fear of indicating this attitude openly

After the criticism, it was inevitable that the guilt of the authorities would be declared through cursing. The cursing of the Umayyads and those who followed their policy has .become a fixed characteristic in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

This is what we understand to have happened during the Umayyad and the'Abbasid periods. Later, in times of freedom, the rites of remembrance were held in public. The criticism and cursing of the Umayyads and 'Abbasids took place openly without arising any opposition from the actual authorities. That was because it had become criticism which was devoid of any

political content, even though criticism of people in the past may on many occasions .be an indirect criticism of the existing authorities

### The First Stage

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn began in this stage in a simple form, as we mentioned in the introduction of this chapter. However, throughout this stage, they .developed in form and in mode

The formal aspect, we believe, provided the rites of remembrance with fixed times, i.e. they entered into a framework of time and became a cultural activity which was .progrAmined in terms of times

:This programme of times consisted of

Occasions connected by time with memory of al-Husayn's revolution. They were .١ the first ten days of the lunar month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic year. After the ١٠th Muharram (the day of the battle) was made a special day of memorial, the first days of Muharram (lst-l٠th) became, in the later period of this stage, special days of memorial.This means that the temporal span for carrying out the rites of remembrance and showing grief was extended from what it had been at the .beginning of the institution of rites of remembrance

Days of memorial which had become times to make the pilgrimage (ziyara) to al- .٣ .Husayn's grave

The most important of these is, in our estimation, the night and day of ١٥th Sha'ban. Some early texts issued by Imam Muhammad ibn'Ali al-Baqir give evidence for that. In them the Imam urges that the pilgrimage be made to the grave of al-Husayn on the middle day in

the month of Sh'aban. More were issued by Imam al-Sadiq with regard to that (matter.(۱)

It appears from a text, mentioned earlier, which 'Abd Allah ibn Haminad al-Basri reported from Imam al-Sadiq that the ۱۵th Shaban was a very important occasion for .the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

Next in importance to the night and day of the ۱۵th Sha'ban, in terms of performing the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, are the other days in the year on which the Imams have urged the pilgrimage to al-Husayn to be made. For example, there is the Day of 'Arafat, which is ۹th Dhu al-Hijja, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar; the evening of the festival at the end of the fast ('id al-fitr), which is the ۱st Shawwal, the tenth month of the Islamic calendar; ۱st Rajab, the seventh month of the Islamic (calendar; and there are other occasions.(۲)

These days were days of memorial for people to gather together where a great number of people would meet to perform the pilgrimage of al-Husayn. If we are allowed to consider the picture which comes in the report given by 'Abd Allah ibn Hammad al-Basri as a model, we could hold the view that these days of memorial were also great seasons for the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn as well as being .days of memorial for the pilgrimage

Circles and gatherings were held at which poems in praise of the Holy Family and in lament for al-Husayn, his family and his followers were



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۱- Ibn Qawlawayh, op.cit., ۱۷۹-۱۸۰.

۲- For ‘Arafa cf. ibid., ۱۶۹-۱۷۳; the evening of the festival of the end of the fast, ibid Tradition nos. ۶ and ۱۸۲ where there is one Tradition in which Imam al-Sadiq mentiones that ۱st Rajab should be considered of secondary importance in realation to the Day of ‘Arafah. There is also a Tradition from the eighth Imam ‘Ali ibn Musa al-Rida.

.recited, and the events of the Battle of Karbala' were discussed

We can hold the view that the rites of remembrance on these occasions were not limited to the shrine of al-Husayn at Karbala' but took place in many of the countries where the Shi'a lived on those days on which the pilgrimage took place. The Shi'a, who were unable to get to Karbala', used to perform the rituals of the pilgrimage away .from it

This kind of ritual of pilgrimage would be appropriate for the performance of the rites of remembrance by those of the Shi' a who were far away from Karbala' as the evidence of the report from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, which we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, suggests. In it there is a direction to the Shi'a who are far .away from Karbala' on the Day of 'Ashura' to perform rites of remembrance

A clear text has been reported by al-Sayyid Muhsin which gives evidence for and expresses the idea that the days of memorial for the pilgrimage were days of :memorial for the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. It says

It is reported in Kitab al-Muhadara wa-Akhbar al-Mudhakara by al-Tannukhi that' there was at the Ha'ir in Karbala' a man called Ibn Asdaq who used to recite poetry about al-Husayn in the wailing style. Abu al-Hasan, the scribe, sent Abu al-Qasim al-Tannukhi 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Dawud, the father of the author of al-Nashwar, to this reciter so that he should recite in the wailing style

:for al-Husayn a poem to some of the Kufan poets. The poem begins

.O eyes flow with tears and let them fall unceasingly

:Abu al-Qasim commented

This was ١٥th Sha'ban and the people at that time were put under great pressure by' the Hanbalites when they wanted to go out to the Ha' ir. I continued to be polite with them until I got out and I was in the Ha'ir on the evening of ١٥th Sha'ban.'(١)

This probably took place between the end of the third century of the hijra and the beginning of the fourth, as Abu al-Qasim al-Tannukhi was born in ٢٧٨ and died in ٣۴٢.

These days of memorial, which were repeated in every year, brought together classes of people from different directions, from various countries and from a variety of cultural levels. This led to a unified view of the revolution of al-Husayn and to the enrichment of popular consciousness with new outpourings of the emotional and psychological influence which rooted the history and slogans of the revolution firmly in this consciousness, together with the spreading of the idea of the rites of remembrance in areas where it had not yet become established. Thus the rites of remembrance were instituted in new areas of the Islamic world every year.

The institution of the pilgrimage did the institution of the rites of remembrance a great service at the level of rooting the feeling for the cause of al-Husayn in the rites of remembrance in new lands year after year.

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There was



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١- Muhsin al Amin, A'yan al-Shia, op cit, XVII, ٣٢٠.

another formal element which entered the practice of the rites of remembrance for .al-Husayn

That was that there began to arise men and women who specialised in reciting the life of al-Husayn and others who specialised in composing poetry of lament with the .styles of wailing

The life story of al-Husayn, after being a dialogue between those gathered together, became a text which was recited while the others listened. Those who did the recitation were 'the story-tellers'. We have alread discussed the allusion to them in one of the accounts of the pilgrimage which tells of what happened at Karbala' on ١٥th .Sha'ban, namely the account of 'Abd Allah ibn Hammad al-Basri

The texts which these story-tellers recited were the books about the death of al-Husayn. An indication of that is given in the historical accounts, some of which we have mentioned with regard to what happened during the reign of the 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Musta'sim. Similarly we have mentioned a clearly-stated text on the subject .which came within the books about the death of al-Husayn

After it having been the poet who recited his own poem or the special reciter of the poet reciting the poem of his poet in a gathering which was brought together by chance or hurriedly, there came men and women who specialised in memorising much of the poetry which was composed in lament for al-Husayn and in praise of the .Holy Family

Then deliberate gatherings were held, which were for the purpose of keeping the memory of al-Husayn

alive. The man or woman who specialised in the wailing technique would be invited to recite poetry in this special style in which the effects of voice-production served to help bring about weeping which was one of the aims of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

The sources sometimes incidentally mention the names of some of the men and women who specialised in this special style of wailing recitation.

۱. Abu al-Hasan, the scribe, sent Abu al-Qasim 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Dawud al-Tannukhi to a reciter called 'Ali ibn Asdaq al-Ha'iri so that he should recite poetry in the wailing style for al-Husayn at Karbala' on the evening of the middle day of Sha'ban to some Kufans.

Abu al-Qasim was born in the year ۲۷۸ and died in the year ۳۴۲. Therefore at the end of the third century of the hijra or the beginning of the fourth century there existed specialist reciters of the wailing technique who enjoyed reputations which went beyond their own towns.

۲. The name of Dharra, the wailing woman, is reported by al-Nisaburi according to what Shaykh al-Mufid (d. ۴۱۳) mentioned in his al-Amali.

۳. Ahmad ibn al-Muzaddiq, the reciter with the wailing technique, was alive in ۳۴۶ and he enjoyed a considerable reputation in Baghdad.(۱)

۴. There was a professional reciter with the wailing technique in Baghdad whose name was Abu al-Qasim 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Shatranji, who used to recite wailing poetry about al-Husayn at Karbala'. He must have been alive between the end of the third century of the hijra



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۱- Cf. Yaqut, Mu'jam al-Udaba'; Bughyat al-Nubula', ۱۶۱

and the beginning of the fourth because he is mentioned for his wailing recitation of (his poem to al-Nashi' al-Saghir, 'Ali ibn'Abd Allah ibn al-Wasif (۲۷۱-۳۶۵).(۱)

There was in Baghdad a famous accomplished woman wailing reciter called Khallab. .۵ She gave a wailing recitation of a poem by al-Nashi '. She was alive in ۳۲۳. Al-Barbahari ((d. ۳۲۹) ordered her to be killed.(۲)

In Fatimid Egypt in the fourth century there was a group of people who specialised .۶ in wailing and recitation. We can assume that the same practice was taking place in .Syria and Iraq. The following text illustrates the situation in Egypt

On the Day of 'Ashura ' in the year ۳۹۶, it happened, as it did every year, that the" markets were closed. The reciters came out to the mosque of Cairo and stopped there as they gathered for wailing a recitation. After that day, the chief judge (qadi) gathered the rest of the reciters who earned their living from wailing and recitation and said to them: 'You would not pester the people to take something from them if you stayed at your shops. Do not earn a living by wailing and reciting. Whoever wants (to do that can do it in the desert.'"(۳)

This formal development in the practice of the rites of remembrance is one of the changes which occurred during the first of the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. There is no doubt neither reciters nor story-tellers could recite from written texts when this

p: ۲۶۱

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Yaqut, op cit, V, ۳۳۵ -۱

Cf. Bughyat al-Nubala'. His name is Qutayba Abu Bahari. Al-Yafi'i described him as -۲ 'the shaykh of the Hanbalites'. However he claims that he died in ۳۲۳. Mirat al-Jinan, II, ۲۸۶-۷

.Cf. Al-Maqrizi, al-Khitat -۳

.stage began in the first century of the hijra

This development was introduced later when the remembrance rites took on the character of an institution with special dates and customs and when this institution, as a result of that, began to create its own time schedule, its own devices and its own .human apparatus

We will see that the story-teller, who used to undertake the task of giving the historical information about the revolution and would speak to the mind and the emotions through his stories, and the reciter, who used to arouse the emotions of his listerners with the poetry of lamentation we will see that both of these men became united in the following period in the second stage into the preacher of the pulpit for al-Husayn who brought together the function of the story-teller and the function of the .reciter

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In the middle of this period the geographical area where the performance of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn was held spread in the climate of relative freedom which was provided by Shi' ite political forces gaining power in many of the Islamic .countries

From the year ٣٣٣ the Hamdanids began to extend their domination over Syria and Mosul. Under the protection of their government Shi' ism flourished. Naturally, as a result of that, Shi' ite thought and Shi' ite institutions flourished. Aleppo became a centre for Shi'ite jurisprudence just as it became a destination for Shi'ite men of .culture, scholars and poets

There is no doubt that the

rites of remembrance for al-Husayn gained a share of this relaxation which gave an opportunity for those who cared for it to practise it and develop it in form and mode.

The poetry of lament for al-Husayn flourished in this climate. The lamentation poetry which was composed under the Hamdanids reflected the people's increasing concern for the institution of the pilgrimage, as we mentioned earlier when we gave evidence for it in the discussion of the pilgrimage (ziyara) in the poetry of lamentation for al-Husayn.

This leads to the belief that the rites of remembrance gained a great share in that especially after the Fatimids gained control over Egypt which influenced, and was influenced by, the Syrian region.

Muhammad Kurd 'Ali in his book Khitat al-Sham, mentions this in a discussion of the group called 'Mutawalis', i.e. the Shi' a, when he refers to the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn: 'During the Days of 'Ashura ' the Shi' a gather and perform rites of remembrance for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali, the martyr of Karbala.'

Their observance of that goes back a long way to the period of the tragedy.... It appears from the life of Dik al-Jinn al-Humsi in Kitab al-Aghani that these gatherings to perform rites of remembrance for al-Husayn were well-known at this time.'(١)

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At the time when the Hamdanids became masters of Syria, the Buwayhids, who were also of the Shi'a, took control of Iraq and Iran, gradually depriving the 'Abbasid Caliph of all effective authority. This provided the



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١- Muhammad Kurd Ali, Khitat al-Sham, ٢۵١

land which gave birth to the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn the opportunity to enjoy a freedom, which it had frequently lost, to perform the rituals of the rites associated with al-Husayn. In this way the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn .developed greatly in form and mode

It seems that at first the Buwayhid did not publicly and clearly proclaim their Shi'ite position. They did not make the state a party to the practices of the rites of remembrance. They only allowed the people freedom to practise them. However, .some two decades later they did make the rites of remembrance a state affair

:Ibn al-Athir has reported in the events of the year ۳۵۲

In this year the state ordered the people to shut their shops on the ۱۰th of Muharram and to suspend the markets and all buying and selling. The people did that, and the Sunnis had no power to prevent that because of the great number of the Shi' a and (the fact that the authorities were from them.(۱

It is well-known that the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn did not begin in Iraq at this time. They go back to the earliest Islamic times as we mentioned previously. In this period they became much more widespread and during the rule of the Buwayhids .they became an official ceremony

The Buwayhids may have delayed the announcement of the rites of remembrance as an official institution out of their concern at the beginning of their establishment of their state, for the feelings of



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Cf. Ibn al-Athir, op cit, It is strange that he reports the Sunni reaction to the rites of -۱ remembrance in the year ۳۸۹ A.H. He says 'In he same way, the Sunnis did on the ۱۸th of Muharram the same as the Shi'ites did on the Day of Ashura'. They said that it was .the day on which Mus'ab Ibn al Zubayr was killed

.a group of their subjects who were not Shi'ites

On the eve of the Buwayhids assumption of power, the Hanbalites had become fanatically hostile towards these rites of remembrance. They had used violence in their opposition to Shi' ite activity in this field. There are many historical texts which provide evidence for that. Among these is the following report in Bughyat al-Nubala ':

There was in Baghdad a famous accomplished woman wailing reciter who was" known as Khallab. She gave a wailing recitation of a poem by al-Nashi' and we heard her in the houses of some of the leaders, because at that time the people were not able to perform wailing recitation except with support from men in authority or secretly because of the Hanbalites."(۱)

.This incident took place in ۲۳۲, i.e. ten years before the Buwayhids came to power

We have already referred to the text which explains that 'the people were put under great pressure by the Hanbalites when they wanted to go out to the Ha'ir.' We commented that this took place between the end of the third century of the hijra and .the beginning of the fourth

The Hanbalites then, were using violence in their opposition to the rituals of al-Husayn as represented by the rites of remembrance and the pilgrimage. Ibn al-Athir's statement, '. . . the Sunnis had no power to prevent that because of the great number of the Shi' a,' is not correct. The Sunnis in Iraq even participated in the rites of remembrance. Those



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۱- Cf. Bughyat al-Nubala'.

.among the Sunnis who opposed these rituals were a small group, the Hanbalite sect

These sectarian clashes because of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn seem to have begun at an early time in respect to this period. That was when the Shi' a in the 'Abbasid era tried to perform the rituals associated with al-Husayn publicly and especially in the month of Muharram. Ibn Taghri Burdi has reported in the events for :the year ۱۷۴

Then partisanship rose and there were disturbances between the Sunnis and the" (Rafidites (Shi'a)."(۱)

He does not give the reason for that but it seems likely to be the one which we have .suggested

Egypt had known the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn from a very early time. The Umayyad administration in the Hijaz was afraid of the consequences of the activity which Zaynab had been striving to carry out in Medina after her return from Karbala', where, through the family rites of remembrance, she was enflaming the Hijaz with .the spirit of the revolution in a society which was ready for it

Amr ibn Said ibn al-'As the governor of Medina wrote to Yazid ibn Mu' awiya to tell him' of his fear of the consequences of the movement of Zaynab if she continued her activities. He said: 'The presence of Zaynab among the people of Medina is inflammatory. She is eloquent, clever and intellegent. She and those with her are '.determined to take vengeance for the death of al-Husayn

An order appears to have issued that Zaynab should



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Ibn Taghri Burdi, al-Nujum al-Zahira, II, ۷۷ on the events of the year ۱۷۴. He also -۱ mentions on the event of the year ۱۷۱ (ibid, II, ۶۸). In this year, ۱۷۱, Harun al-Rashid expelled the Alids in Baghdad to Medina. This political measure seems to have aimed at preventing the influence of their presence spreading Shi'ism, tendencies of loyalty

to the Alids and opposition to the Abbasid amidst the people of Iraq and Iran, whose actual leadership, both cultural and political was not situated in Baghdad, in contrast .to the situation in Medina which was no longer a political centre of the state

be sent outside the Hijaz. This point in the history of Zaynab is unclear. How was the order for her to travel issued? Why was Egypt rather than any other country chosen? .The sources do not provide us with an explanation of the real situation

What we do know from the sources is that Zaynab arrived in Egypt in the month of Sha'ban in the year ۶۱, i.e. approximately eight months after the Battle of Karbala'. Maslama ibn Mukhallad al-Ansari, the governor of Egypt, met her in Bilbis with the leaders of the Muslims amid weeping and condolences. Maslama went with her and she resided with him. She lived there for about a year after her arrival and then she .died on ۱۴th Rajab in the year ۶۲

The Umayyad choice of Egypt as the place of exile for Zaynab may have arisen out of the belief that any propaganda activity she undertook there would have only limited effect on the stability of the Umayyad government, as Egypt was far away from events in Iraq and the people who knew about what was going on in Iraq was a very .limited number of those in government and those associated with them

The ordinary people knew nothing about the true situations, in contrast to the people in Iraq, Syria and the Arabian peninsula where there was an active and busy .exchange of ideas, news and people among them

We believe that Zaynab, during the short period which she spent in Egypt, was

able to influence the Egyptians, who came into contact with her, to varying degrees .'because she must have spoken to them about what had happened at Karbala

However, we have to admit that this influence was so limited that its effects were not shown in any wavering of the people's allegiance to the Umayyad government in Damascus, although this influence was a nucleus whose importance for the future .could not be ignored

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While the Hamdanids in Syria and Mosul and the Buwayhids in Iraq and Iran were planting their authority firmly and while the rites of remembrance and the other rituals associated with al-Husayn were flourishing under these Shi'ite governments, the Fatimids were extending their control over Egypt which they entered in ۳۵۸. In this way the area, in which the rites of al-Husayn and the other rituals flourished, was .increased far beyond what it had been in the past

The Fatimids, when they took control of Egypt, did not introduce rituals to an area where the rites of remembrance had not existed. They had existed there during the weak rule of the Ikshidids whom the Fatimids overthrew. Al-Maqrizi in al-Khitat has explained that the call for grief for al-Husayn took place during the time of the .Ikshidids and its scope was broadened during the time of the Fatimids

Yet the situation of the rituals of the rites of remembrance in Egypt before the Fatimids was the same as their situation on Iraq before the Buwayhids. They existed but they

aroused opposition against them from some fanatical sectarian elements. An example of this is what happened on 'Ashura' in the year ۳۵۰ when a disturbance occurred between the soldiers and a group of citizens at the tomb of Umm Kulthum. It appears that this was because of the rites of remembrance that had been held on .that day

However, we should notice that the situation was not always like this during the 'Abbasid period. There was a long period of time for the Shi' a in Egypt when they were exposed to persecution. An example of that is what happened to them when Yazid ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Dinar was appointed governor of Egypt by the 'Abbasid Caliph, .al-Muntasar, in the month of Rajab in the year ۲۴۲

He searched for all the Rawafid (Shi' a) in Egypt, destroyed them or punished them' and afflicted them. Their important members were suppressed and groups of them taken to Iraq in the worst possible way.' (۱) These measures seem to have been taken .in the year ۲۴۵

After the coming of the Fatimids, the rituals on 'Ashura ' became official ceremonies of state, and the rites of remembrance became one of the cultural institutions of the .state

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The favourable political situation in Iraq, Iran, Egypt and North Africa gave the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn a golden opportunity to become widespread. They became public under the protection of the state on most occasions. This did not stop them from arousing the



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۱- Ibn Taghri Birdi, op.cit., ۱۱, ۳۰۸-۳۰۹, on the events of the year ۲۴۲. He also adds: 'Then he turned his attention to the 'Alids, imposed severe restrictions on them and expelled '.them from Egypt

.opposition of fanatical groups, especially the Hanbalites in Iraq

In the atmosphere of freedom and security which political development provided over a vast geographical area, the rites of remembrance were able to attain for themselves developments in form which were of great importance, the most outstanding of which we have discussed in the first part of this section. Similarly they achieved for themselves changes in the mode of their content, which we will discuss .in what follows

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The developments of mode in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn during the first :stage occurred in the following ways

There was a widening of the exposition of the details of the events and the ancient .١ causes which had preceded them, including matters associated with the succession to the Apostle of God, the policies which were followed during the reign of 'Uthman and .the Umayyad policy in a comprehensive manner

We find manifestations of this development in the poetry of the second century of the hijra and after, insofar as in the second half of the second century there begins to appear what we could describe as 'lamentation poetry with a historical and theological tendency.' The poetry comes to use the events of history with the .rationality of theologians in order to give an explanation to the subject of al-Husayn

Sufyan ibn Mus'ab al-'Abdi (d. ١٢٠ or ١٧٨) and al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadi (d. ١٢٠) were possibly the first who used this technique in lamentation poetry, even though al-Kumayt's poetry of praise and of the

.virtues of the Holy Family shows more of this style than his lamentation poetry

When we come to the third century of the hijra and what follows it, we find this kind of lamentation poetry widely among the poets of lament for al-Husayn. Such poets include 'Abd al-Salam ibn Raghban (known as Dik al-Jinn), Di'bil al-Khuza'i, al-Qasim ibn Yusuf, the secretary, al-Sharif al-Radi and al-Sharif al-Murtada. This kind of poetic mode continued to grow and spread until by the end of the fifth century lamentation .poetry came to be like a record of history and virtues

We judge that this phenomenon in lamentation poetry would be reflected in the rites .of remembrance for al-Husayn during this period

There was a growth in the extent of the mentioning of virtues in the rites of .۳ remembrance for al-Husayn. The rites of remembrance began to include the mentioning of the virtues and the outstanding position in the history of Islam of the Imams of the Holy Family, the testamentary designations (wasaya) by the Apostle of God of the Imams and the opposition of some of the umma to these testamentary designations. In addition to that special forms of honour were expressed about Imam .al-Husayn

We became acquainted with this new phenomenon in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn through the lamentation poetry which was composed in the second century and afterwards. Similarly we learn of it through the books about the death of al-Husayn which were compiled after the second century insofar as these books became

concerned with the recording of Traditions about virtues of the Holy Family and al-Husayn and expressions of honour as well as the historical account. The poetry of lament which was composed in this period is full of evidence of this phenomenon.

۵. Poetry and prose become integrated. We believe that the rites of remembrance began in the form of conversations. Then there came a story which was reported or a poem which was recited. Then there arose a written text (an account of the death of al-Husayn). At the end of this stage a form began to emerge in which poetry and prose were integrated. The rites of remembrance became a mixture of the two together. Prose tells the story of the tragedy in the spirit of giving an account of history and virtues and with only a limited amount of emotional expressions. Poetry colours the story and endows it with a sad tragic artistic quality.

We are not saying that the preacher for al-Husayn, whom we know today, could be found at the end of this stage. We are only saying that the predecessor of this preacher had begun to be formed at the end of this stage as represented by a story-teller who embellished his stories with pieces of poetry, or by a reciter who followed his recitation by giving account of the stories and the virtues or prepared for it in that way.

۷. Other Imams and other revolutions were included. Since the Battle of Karbala', the deaths had been

caused by the sword or poisoning of a great number of 'Alid revolutionaries against the Umayyads or the 'Abbasids or whose loyalty the authorities doubted or whom they suspected of specific political aspirations. Similarly some of the Imams of the Holy Family had been killed by poisoning or had died as they were being oppressed .and persecuted by the governments of their time

The Shi'a used to grieve for what had happened. They would add these griefs of theirs to their great grief for Imam al-Husayn. They would add the horrible events and tragedies, which filled the lives of these later Imams and revolutionary 'Alids, to their tragic inheritance which was linked to the lives of the Holy Family, in general, and to .the Imams of the Holy Family, in particular

We know that this material of revival of memories was reflected in lamentation poetry. One of its outstanding features had become the mentioning of the hardships .and misfortunes of the Holy Family at different times

We think it likely that this material of revival of memories, which was reflected in lamentation poetry, was also reflected in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and .had become more indispensable within the story-telling, poetic and critical element

We think it likely that the story-teller, or the wailing reciter, used to discuss in his stories, or his wailing recitation, what had happened to the Imams after al-Husayn, or .what had happened to certain of the martyrs of 'Alid revolutions after al-Husayn

He would do this in order

to honour them, to tell of their fate and to recite what had been composed in lament for them. All that would be sealed with the mentioning of the tragedy of Imam al-Husayn as being the prototype and most painful to men's hearts of the tragedies which had befallen the Holy Family.

Sometimes towards the end of this stage there was even the growth of 'Alid rites of remembrance in a general form. A report from the emir Tala' i' ibn Zurayk (۴۹۵-۵۵۶) suggests this. On the night of ۱۹th Ramadan in the year ۵۵۶, which was the night he was killed a little before morning, he said: 'This is a night like that on which Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, was killed.' He ordered the reading of the account of his death.(۱)

Among the things which point to the correctness of our suggestion that the sufferings of the rest of the Holy Family had been introduced into the content of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn is the growth in the compilations about the subject of the Holy Family.

During this stage books were compiled which included the life story of each one of the Imams or of the 'Alids who had been killed by the sword or by poisoning. Outstanding examples of such compilations are Maqatil al-Talibiyyin (The Killings of the Talibids) by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani (d. ۳۵۶) and Kitab al-Irshad (The Book of Guidance into the Lives of the Twelve Imams) by Shaykh al-Mufid.

Both these writers did



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۱- Al-Maqrizi, al-Khitat, IV, ۸.

not limit their books to reporting the killing of al-Husayn but their writings were extended to others. In Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani has mentioned all the Talibids whom he knew to have been killed at the hands of the authorities in Umayyad and 'Abbasid times, even though he had devoted a large chapter of his book to the killing of Imam al-Husayn. Shaykh al-Mufid, in Kitab al-Irshad, gives an account of all the Imams after mentioning Imam 'Ali's life, particularly with the Apostle of God .and with Fatima

After this section by far the largest section of his book is specially devoted to Imam al-Husayn.

Among the best pieces of evidence for the entry of this development of mode into the rites of remembrance for Imam al-Husayn is a famous ode by the poet Di'bil al-Khuza'i (d. ۲۴۶), which he recited before the eighth Imam, 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida in the town of Merv. In it he mentions:

i. 'Ali as the Commander of the faithful, his place in Islam and how he was deprived of succession despite having the right to it;

His sadness for 'Abd Allah ibn Ja'far, his father, Ja'far al-Tayyar, Imam 'Ali, Imam al-Husayn, Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin and other 'Alids;

He addresses the Lady Fatima, the fair, mentioning the graves of her descendants, two at Kufa, the graves at Medina, the grave at Fakh and in Gurgan and the graves in Baghdad.(۱)

'Then he returns to speaking of al-Husayn, his revolution and the tragedy of Karbala



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۱- Perhaps he means by the two graves in Kufa, the graves of Imam 'Ali and Muslim ibn 'Aqil. The graves in Medina are probably those of Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and Imam Jafar al-Sadiq. The grave in Fakhkh refers to the grave of al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn

al-Husayn ibn 'Ali who revolted in ۱۶۹ and was martyred at Fakhkh, which is near Mecca. The grave of Gurgan would be that of Yahya ibn Zayd ibn' Ali ibn al-Husayn who was martyred in ۱۲۵ when Nasr ibn Sayyar was governor of Khurasan. He was crucified after Abu Muslim took control of Khurasan. He took him down and buried .him

.with fuller detail than he had given at the beginning of his ode

This ode, at this period, shows the origin of this change of mode in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn by mentioning all the hardships of the Holy Family together. That is because it reflects the popular Shi' ite awareness of the nature of the oppressive relationship between the rulers and the Holy Family. The Shi'ite is made .sad and angry by this relationship

This element in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn has further developed in the second and third stages until its characteristics have become integrated through the .growth which will be explained in the appropriate part of this chapter

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This picture of the development of mode in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in this first stage which extends from ۶۱ to just prior to the fall of Baghdad in the seventh century of the Hijra - this picture is best reflected in five texts, in addition to the poetry of lamentation in this period as we have alluded to it within the study as well as the general sources for history and civilisation. The five texts which we have just referred :to are the following

۱. Maqtal al-Husayn by Abu Mikhnaf Lut ibn Yahya. This text is preserved in the Ta 'rikh of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari.(۱)

۳. Maqatil al-Talibiyyin by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani (d. ۳۵۶).

۵. Kitab al-Futuh by Ibn A'tham Abu Muhammad Ahmad (d. ۳۱۴). This book is also extensively reported in the Maqtal



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۱- There is a book circulating among the ordinary people which has the title 'Maqtal al-Husayn by Abu Mikhnaf'. It is a forgery.

.al-Husayn by al-Khawarizmi

.Kitab al Irshad by Shaykh al-Mufid Muhammad ibn Nu'man .۷

Maqtal al-Husayn by al-Khawarizmi .۹

Among these texts we can see that Abu Mikhnaf's has brevity, historical accuracy and a sensitive portrayal with the emotional outbursts being very limited. The poetic element is rare except for the material organically related to the story of the battle. In the later texts we can see an increase in the presentation of the details, a concern to mention virtue and merit, a growth in the emotional expressions and a richness in extraneous poetic material which is not organically connected to the battle, whether .in poetry of lamentation or poetry of virtues

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To summarise everything which we have mentioned, we can say that in its first stage the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn included a fixed element which was an exposition of the tragedy of al-Husayn together with criticism of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid government. This criticism was either explicitly stated or given in allusions depending on what was possible in the light of the circumstances of the rites of remembrance and the safety of the participants from attack by the authorities or by .fanatical anti-Shi' ites

The rites of remembrance developed during this stage in terms of form and content as we have mentioned earlier in this study. The development in mode was concentrated on the content in four ways: an expansion of the exposition of the details and historical background of the tragedy; the growth of the reports about virtues in

the rites of remembrance; the integration of prose and poetry; and the inclusion in the rites of remembrance of the sufferings of the Imams of the Holy Family and .other'Alid revolutionaries

### The Second Stage

#### point

In this stage the rites of remembrance preserved the fixed element, namely the .account of the tragedy and criticism of the authorities

At this stage, however, the criticism of the Umayyads and 'Abbasids was direct as they no longer had any existence in the political life of Iraq, Iran and other Islamic countries, except in a formal way which had no value as a result of what took place in Mamluk Egypt. Yet this clear direct criticism was now merely words without any real .content. It was a theoretical criticism of something which no longer existed

Direct criticism of the contemporary authorities was a dangerous business which .exposed the critics to the greatest dangers, sometimes death

We doubt, whether the direct criticism of the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids in this stage contained any attitude towards the contemporary authorities, which might have arisen out of a clear understanding of the guidance possible through the memory of al-Husayn, in the way which we indicated took place on some occasions in .the first stage where there was indirect criticism of contemporary authorities

At this stage the memory of al-Husayn had lost its political and social guidance, in the understanding of the Shi'ite, towards the plight which he was suffering as a result of the policies of despotic rulers. It had become a ceremony which was merely related

to the Hereafter except on very rare occasions which sometimes might occur. Shaykh al-Turayhi has reported what appears to be his view of the function of the rites of remembrance in his work, al-Muntakhab:

My brothers, weep and lament much for this great and noble man so that you may obtain a good reward from the great Lord. God has made our following them in the actions which he has made possible, our weeping for them with abundant tears and cursing their enemies, the people of error, take the place of fighting alongside in the day of the battle.(١)

We doubt, however, whether he meant by 'their enemies, the people of error,' anyone except the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids and their governors who had persecuted the Holy Family. We think it very probable that he was not referring by this expression and others like it to every wrongdoer and oppressor of the people among the rulers and their supporters.

This is supported by the fact that the examples which he gave were the rulers and governors who have been directly oppressive to the Holy Family by killing, imprisonment, terrorisation, confiscation, the destruction of graves and the like, without extending it to include ever wrongdoer and oppressor. The content of the first session which he gives in the book, al-Muntakhab, is evidence for that.

That was the position with regard to the fixed element. As far as changes were concerned, these occurred in the rites of remembrance in developments of form and mode which



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١- Al-Turayhi, al-Muntakhab, ٢٩.

.were of very great importance

.The developments in form appeared in the following two matters

The days of memorial for celebrating the rites of remembrance became more fixed .١ and more organised. Similarly the different human elements involved in the rites of remembrance, including wailing chanters, reciters and story-tellers became more .numerous

However, the rites of remembrance in this stage were subject to persecution and .restrictions in nearly every part of the Islamic world

The roots of Shi'ism in Egypt had been cruelly and savegely torn out after the fall of the Fatimids and the coming to power of the Ayyubids. The same was the case in Syria. In this stage, too, the Turks spread their authority to Iraq. Sectarian fanaticism against the Shi' a received protection which enabled it to persecute Shi' ite activities, .and especially the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

This was among the reasons why these activities were restricted to traditional Shi'ite centres (the sacred shrines in Iraq) and to those other places where the rites of remembrance could be held in secret or almost in secret. The only area in this stage where the rites of remembrance flourished was Iran after the Safavids came to power. In Iran Shi'ism became strong and its activities in every field flourished. The chief of these was the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, which thrived under the .Safavids

The Second Stage In this stage, striking oneself became a firm element in some of .٢ ..the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in Iraq and Iran

This kind of striking oneself was one of the customs which the Buwayhids had introduced into the rites of remembrance. It was accepted by the emergence of a kind of rhythmic poetry in classical Arabic or in colloquial. The rites of remembrance used to begin or end with it and it was accompanied by striking the chest with the top .half of the body being naked, or by striking the chest when still covered by clothes

This used to happen in the rites of remembrance for men. In the women's rites the striking had been a basic element, as we have already indicated in this study, and it is .still so today

So much for the development in form. As for the development in the mode of content of the rites of remembrance, our evidence for that in this stage is the following books: (i) Manaqib Al Abi Talib (The Outstanding Qualities of the Family of Abu Talib) by Ibn Shahrashub al-Sarawi al-Mazandarani (d. ۵۸۸); (ii) Muthir al-Ahzan (The Arousal of Grief) by Ibn Nama al-Hilli (d. ۶۴۵); (iii) Al-Luhuf fi Qatla al-Tufuf (Sorrow for the Dead .(on the Banks) by Ibn Tawus al-Hilli (d. ۶۶۴

.In addition to these, there are the poetic works which were composed in this period

:The development in mode appears in the following matters

### The Language of the Rites of Remembrance

The language of the rites of remembrance is quiet and objective at the beginning of .the first stage. It preserves this character for a long period of time during this stage

Then a change began to

enter into this aspect towards the end of the stage so that it has become emotional in the second stage. The object of the language in the first stage was to portray the events of the revolution. In the second stage the object has come to be to arouse the mind and the emotions of the people attending the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

Just as rhyming-prose (saj') became an established feature in the style of writing and oratory in that period, so it did in the language of the rites of remembrance when the matter was not concerned with reading an historical text word for word and only depended on the composition of the preacher or the writer.

Mostly this rhyming prose was weak, devoid of artistic grandeur. In what follows we will present two texts, one of which is by Ibn Nama and the other by Ibn Tawus in order to try and give a picture of the emotional language of the rites of remembrance.

Ibn Nama wrote:

"(Al-Husayn) said: 'Arise for death which is inevitable.' They rose and the two armies met, foot-soldiers and horsemen. The battle was fierce. Because of the dust that raised, courage was hidden. The hard strong spear whetted the black blood while the Yemeni sword was heard striking into heads. Al-Husayn, peace be with him, did not find anyone to listen to his warning amid those who fell in war.

They had disbelieved in the Apostle without preferring the cutting swords and spear-tips. There was nothing

left between them except skulls and sliding swords. You could see the heads falling like down-pouring rain and burnt-out sparks. You could recite verses in describing the situation because you knew the battle would make them become decayed bones."(۱)

:Ibn Tawus wrote about the return of Zayn al-'Abidin with the prisoners to Medina

Then he, the blessings of God be with him, journeyed to Medina with his family. He" looked at the house of his people and his men. He saw those houses wailing in the name of their circumstances and wailing at the misfortunes of their tears as they fiowed for the loss of their defenders and their men. They grieve for them with the grief of bereaved women. They ask the people at the halting place about them. Their .grief was excited by the deaths of their killed ones

The houses call out for their sake and for the bereaved among them. They say, 'People, forgive me wailing and lamenting. Help me in this noble tragedy. These people, at whose loss I grieve and for whose noble conduct I yearn, were the companions of my days and nights, the lights of my darkness and my dawns, the sinews of my honour and my pride, the causes of my strength and my victory, and ".'what is left of my suns and my moons

Rhyming-prose continued to be a permanent style in the language of the rites of ,remembrance until the end of this stage and the beginning of the third stage



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Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, ۴۱ -۱

insofar as Shaykh Fakhr al-Din al-Turayhi (d. ١٠٧٥) was a representative of the second stage of the rites of remembrance through his book al-Muntakhab. This book represents a development in the manner of writing the account of the death of al-Husayn.

He divided it into sessions (majalis) and parts in accordance with the nights and days on which the rites of remembrance were held. I maintain that Shaykh al-Turayhi used emotional rhyming-prose in writing the sessions which he compiled in al-Muntakhab. In that way we know that the stage began with the language of the rites of remembrance in emotional rhyming- prose and ended in this form as well.

### Historical Accuracy

In this stage the scope was extended to include embellishments in the narration of events and became particularly tolerant in accepting accounts connected with actions which would lead to exciting the emotions. Among the examples of that is the account of the marriage of al-Qasim ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn 'Abi Talib to the daughter of al-Husayn.

Another is the report that the 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Mutawakkil, continued to plough up the grave of al-Husayn for twenty years.(١) Both of these reports were untrue. When al-Qasim ibn al-Hasan died as a martyr, he was still a youth who had not reached the age to marry, and there is no reliable historical text concerning this marriage.

Similarly the period of the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil, from the time he was given the pledge of allegiance to the time he was killed, was about fifteen years. (He



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١- Al-Turayhi, op cit, ٢٧٣-۵, ٣٣٨-٩.

.(was given the pledge of allegiance in ۲۳۲ and he was killed in ۲۴۷

Other manifestations of this lack of historical accuracy are found in the acceptance of the suggestions of some of the writers about the death of al-Husayn as if they were .historical facts

### Poetry

In their first stage the rites of remembrance limited the poetry to what was organically connected with the Battle of Karbala', like the rajaz rhymes of the fighters and similar things. Then during the first stage the rites of remembrance developed and began to include poetry of lament and about virtues composed by later poets. It might even be the composition of the author of the particular account of the death of .al-Husayn himself

This is what we find in Ibn Nama al-Hilli's book, Muthir al-Ahzan, where most of the pieces of poetry appropriate to the situation which he is discussing in his account of the death of al-Husayn are his own compositions. He, even, introduced poetic material which was alien to the account of the death of al-Husayn, as though it might be appropriate for it. Thus he wrote: 'I have concluded this book of mine with the verses of Ibn Zaydun al-Maghribi which cut deep into the heart of the grief-stricken (like a javelin.(۱

.Then he quoted a long passage from a famous poem of Ibn Zaydun

This development which occurred in the rites of remembrance towards the end of the first stage increased in a distinct and clear way in the second stage. Thus the



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.Ibn Nama, op. cit., ۹۴-۵ -۱

poetry of lamentation about the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn became, in the very late period, basic material in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. Similarly the poetry about virtue which was composed in praise of the Holy Family also became .basic material in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

Al-Turayhi's book, al-Muntakhab, is the best text to represent the development which took place in the rites of remembrance during this stage. It includes poetry of lamentation and of virtues composed about Imam al-Husayn or the other martyrs from the Hashimites so that frequently the session of the rites of remembrance begins with a piece of lamentation poetry or poetry about virtues and ends with a long .poem by one of the later poets

Similarly within the session there are included pieces of poetry connected with the rites of remembrance or the virtues of the Holy Family or some other poetry which seems appropriate to mention in the course of a story which has been introduced into the rites of remembrance in order to serve the purpose of emphasising the virtues or .the tragedy

#### The Virtues of the Holy Family

Among the developments which were introduced into the rites of remembrance during its first stage was their inclusion of accounts of the virtues which were reported from the Apostle concerning the Imams of the Holy Family or what was .reported in praise and honour of them by other men of Islam

This characteristic clearly increased in the rites of remembrance during their second stage. Special books about the great qualities of

the Holy Family were compiled. The book, Manaqib Al Abi' Talib, by Ibn Shahrashub .exemplifies this in the second stage of the rites of remembrance

The chapter devoted to Imam al-Husayn begins by giving general reports about his virtues from Imam al-Sadiq, from Abu Hurayra reporting from the Apostle of God, from al-Mufaddal ibn ' Umar reporting from Imam al-Sadiq, from al-Suddi, the exegete, from Imam Musa ibn Ja'far and others, together with poetry about his .virtues by al-Zahi, al-Qadi ibn Qadus al-Basri, Kashajim and al-Bashnawi

Then he devotes a section to the miracles of Imam al-Husayn which he concludes with some poetry about his virtues by al-Susi and al-Saruji. He follows this with a section which is about the miracles and signs from Imam al-Husayn after his death, .which is permeated with poetry of lament

After this comes a section about the noble moral qualities of Imam al-Husayn, which is full of poetry about his virtues. He, then, goes on to a section about the Prophet's .love for Imam al-Husayn, which contains much poetry appropriate to that subject

He follows this with a section about his noble accomplishments, which he concludes with a piece of poetry about his virtues. That is followed by a section giving his dates and different names, which is concluded with a poem in praise of his virtues which he attributes to Imam al-Husayn on the Day of 'Ashura'. A further section comes with expressions about his virtues and great qualities, which is also permeated

.with poetry about his virtues. Finally, there comes a section about his martyrdom

Since we find that the extent of the concern with virtues has become deep and increased its roots in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in their second stage in the way we have just described, we will also find that the extent of the concern with virtues in the rites of remembrance is, at the end of their second stage, interposing itself with the rites of remembrance themselves, and becoming part of its internal .fabric

The book, al-Muntakhab, by al-Turayhi gives us a picture of the growth of this extensive concern with virtues in the internal structure of the rites of remembrance. Here we find the virtues mentioned alongside the incidents of the tragedy in order to give a feeling of its grievousness and to form in the listener feelings of respect, love .and disaster

The first section of the third session, for example, is devoted to the second night of the first ten days of Muharram. It begins by mentioning some of the virtues of the .Commander of the faithful, 'Ali ibn 'Abi Talib

Within this it mentions the attitudes of those who reject them. Then the author turns his attention to the tragedy of Karbala'. He says: '. . . Hold true to the truths of the tragedies to his offspring, his sons, his Shi' a and those who loved him. Only look at the dead on the ground, or the imprisoned one as he

suffered throughout his journey, or the unveiled women on the humps of camels whose faces are scrutinised by me ....' Then he mentions the learning of Imam al-Husayn in the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab.

He goes on to say: 'How strange are people who know their noble virtue but still commit dreadful acts against them ....' (1) Al-Turayhi continues in this session and others in this style of mixing virtues together with the tragic events.

#### The Other Imams

This development, which had occurred in the first stage of the rites of remembrance, increases in clearness and becomes more firmly-rooted in the second stage. The tendency to compile works about the tragedies of the Imam becomes widespread emanating from the reality that they represent one course and one tragedy which has many links.

This leads to the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn becoming an integrated whole from this aspect so that the discourse concerning it is not limited merely to referring to the life and martyrdom of al-Husayn. It is extended to include a discussion of the lives, virtues and tragedies of the other Imams. The elements pertaining to the virtues and tragedies of the other Imams become a basic part of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

In the same way this led to the evolution of rites of remembrance being held on the days when they died so that there are rites of remembrance for al-Husayn which are really devoted to the memory of Imams other than al-Husayn. Rites of remembrance have



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1- Al-Turayhi, op. cit., ۴۲ff

come to be held in memorial to the death of the Apostle of God, the death of Imam 'Ali, the death of Imam al-Hasan and the death of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin.

In these rites of remembrance, the life-story and virtues of the Imam, whose memorial it is, is told. The oppression and tyranny which he met from the rulers of his time is also discussed. The session of the rites of remembrance finishes by mentioning Imam al-Husayn. Poetry of lamentation and poetry of virtues permeates the whole of that.

The best example of work which intermingles the other memorials in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn during this stage is al-Muntakhab of al-Turayhi.

### Acts of Renunciation of the World

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, like any cultural or social institution, were influenced by the changes and new factors which occurred in Islamic society during the period between the fall of Baghdad and the beginnings of the modern era, which is the time-span of the second stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn were influenced by what befell the Muslims and his society in this period: Political disintegration, economic backwardness, civil wars, famines and plagues.

In this climate, full of the causes of misery for man and society, there grew a cultural current which provided a philosophy for this misery. It was the Sufism of resignation, which gave the Muslim a philosophy which was able to extend the power of its influence and activity through the claim that it was a religious movement which

concentrated on the Book, the Sunna and the practices of the great representative of .Islam

It was a claim which had absolutely no basis in truth. It arose out of ignorance of the .general spirit of Islam and the influence of non-Islamic Sufi tendencies

This philosophy made the misery of the existing situation a fixed fate created by God and it made resignation and acceptance of this misery a necessary fate for man. It regarded any activity by man and society to change this miserable situation for the better as vain effort. It regarded the purpose of man, in his work and toil in the life of .the world, as death and the grave

As a result of this logic, this philosophy made the memory of al-Husayn into an activity concerned with death rather than activity concerned with life. It made it into ritual which would bring benefit to man in the grave rather than an incentive to make him change the situation of his miserable degrading life. The revolution of al-Husayn came to be considered as if it had been an action which al-Husayn undertook in order to enable people, through repeating and telling his story in words, to enter Paradise by .this kind of verbal activity

The end of the first stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn had witnessed the appearance of this attitude towards the purpose of remembering al-Husayn. However, during the second stage, this attitude became increasingly apparent. Al-Muntakhab of al-Turayhi gives a perfect illustration of

this attitude towards remembering al-Husayn. It is weighed down with expressions :which demonstrate that, like the following

My brothers, you desire the noble mansion of Paradise and great reward. Then" perpetuate your grief, your sadness and your sorrow for them. You should know that God will accept such actions from you and the result will be favourable for you in His .eyes

Yet God will not accept excuses for abandoning the rites of remembrance for the pure Holy Family because His practice is to impose obligations about men after He has inspired them with guidance in order that He may pour goodness upon them so that .they may arrive at perfection

By my life, nothing is more efficacious to attain great reward and remove dread punishment than the performance of the ritual of griefs and making tears flow ".because of the treachery and desertion done to the Holy Family at that time

The Shi'ite man began to perform the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, or to attend them, for the sake of storing up acts of piety for the Hereafter which would .benefit him after death and gain great reward from God

Apart from that, his attendance did not help him to understand them as being an activity which would benefit him in his life and change some of the evil and misery in it. Thus cursing the Umayyads became purely an activity concerned with the Hereafter .and it was not a renunciation of Umayyad policy in its political implications

In the second

stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, the memory of al-Husayn lost its political and social implications concerned with adhering to an attitude of life and .existence in face of the challenges of the miserable situation

The call to renounce the world and the negative preaching which urged men to leave actions involved with living, by rejecting the world as a basic factor of life came into the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn at this stage, alongside the story of the .tragedy

The following line of verse portrays for us how deeply this spirit of renunciation had penetrated into the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn so that the negative attitude :towards life had become intermingled with the tragedy of al-Husayn

Do you hope for good from a world which had despised al-Husayn, the grandson of .the Prophet, and chosen Yazid

The author of al-Muntakhab gives us a picture in a great many passages of this negative attitude of renunciation of the world as it appears in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn during this stage, and how this attitude has become incorporated, in the understanding of the ordinary Shi'ite, with the tragedy of al-Husayn. The following quotation is a good illustration of the way al-Muntakhab :approaches this matter

The base world prompted you to kill the Prophet's offspring. It has been reported by" great men: Love for the world is one of the greatest dangers which will cause the .wrath of God and throw men into Hell-fire

In a Tradition which gives the words

of God, He says: If My servant prays the prayer of the people of Heaven and earth, fasts the fast of the people of Heaven and earth, makes the pilgrimage of the pilgrims of the people of Heaven and earth, does without food like the angels who are close to God, then I see in his heart an atom of love for the world, or for its reputation, or for its leadership, or for its praise, or for its finery, or for its decoration, or even less than .an atom, such a man will not be with Me in My noble abode

Indeed I will root out of his heart love for Me and I will oppress his heart until he forgets any memory of Me so that I will not bedeck him with My mercy on the Day of .Resurrection

In a Tradition from Imam al-Sadiq, the latter said: . . . The Apostle of God said: By God Who sent me as a prophet with the truth, if there was an atom of love for the world in .the hearts of Gabriel and Michael, God would hurl them on their faces into Hell-fire

Brothers, keep yourselves away from all trust in the world. Beware of seeking leadership and high position in it, for it is an abode in which all blessings cease and none of its evil people will be safe. How can an intelligent man be satisfied with the world as an abode after the family of the Apostle

p: ۲۹۴

.and the offspring of Fatima. This, by God, is a place which betrays its friends

There is, by God, no good in it except for those who take their provisions in it for the Day of Resurrection. By my life, no action in it is better than loyalty to the Holy Family (which prompts terror towards the Day of Judgement and its consequences." (١

This attitude of renunciation by the Muslims was formed at an early period and began to express itself in the Shi'ite in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn towards the end of the first stage of those rites. This sad atmosphere of the rites of remembrance, full as it was of tragic memories and terrifying pictures of tyrannical acts of oppression against man, was intensely suitable for the growth of ideas of negative renunciation which was provided with life and strength by the misery of existing life .and ignorance of the spirit of Islam

It continued to grow in the consciousness of the ordinary Shi'ite as an expression of himself in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn during their second stage until it .reached its apex at the end of this stage

This negative attitude of renunciation continued throughout the period of the dark .ages of Islam and it even stretched into the modern era in some areas

The Ottoman government, through its oppression and persecution of the Shi'ite, was one of the factors for the continuation of this negative attitude of renunciation insofar as the Ottomans had power



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.Ibid., ١٥٥-٦. Cf. also ١٦٧ff, ٢٦٦ff, ٣٥٦ff and elsewhere -١

.over Shi' ites

### The Third Stage

As we mentioned earlier, the third stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn began at the beginning of the modern period, and they have continued in this stage .up to the present time

Here we should notice that the books about the death of al-Husayn during this period are only of a very limited use as a source for observing the changes in form and mode .which have occurred in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

The changes of mode which have been introduced into the rites of remembrance have a nature which differs fundamentally from the nature of the books about the death of al-Husayn, for these books are devoted to telling the story of the actual event. We shall see that the changes have made the rites of remembrance go beyond .the story of the actual event to other aims and contents

Indeed, it is possible that some of the books about the death of al-Husayn have participated in tracing the modern direction in some respects, (e.g. the books of al-Amin in terms of historical accuracy). Some of this was in response to the demand for .a new picture

In this stage the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn have witnessed developments .in form and mode of very great importance

In terms of form, the security and freedom which the Shi'ite community has enjoyed in most places have enabled the rites of remembrance for Imam al-Husayn to be performed publicly at every time in the year without fear of prohibition

by the authorities or the populace. However, in areas where the Shi'a do not enjoy religious freedom, limitations on the performance of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn have continued to be imposed by the authorities in those areas, some of .which are in the Arab world and some outside it

The occasions for performing the rites of remembrance have become more numerous. In Iraq and Iran and some other countries, the rites of remembrance are performed during the two lunar months of Muharram and Safar, throughout the night and at the beginning and end of the day, by various craft and cultural groups, as well .as by individuals

This is done in every place which is appropriate for such a meeting provided the weather is suitable. They occur in every Shi'ite town of any significance or in which .there is a large number of the Shi'a

Similarly rites of remembrance for al-Husayn are held on the day of the memorial of the Prophet's death, in memory of the death of each of the eleven Imams of the Holy Family, in memory of the death of the Lady Fatima, the fair, of the Lady Zaynab, .daughter of Imam Ah and of Muslim ibn 'Aqil

On the occurrence of the memorial day of the death of any one of these persons according to the lunar reckoning, rites of remembrance are held in which a preacher reviews his life, tells of the oppressions and tyranny carried out against him and recites some poetry composed

in praise and lament for him. He finishes the rites of remembrance by mentioning .Imam al-Husayn and some of what happened to him

Similarly rites of remembrance for Imam al-Husayn are held in Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, other Gulf regions and some other countries on the evenings of the days of the month of Ramadan. The sessions of these rites of remembrance have acquired great favour .with the ordinary people

In the same way, many people have adopted the practice of holding rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in their houses or in small mosques in the quarters of cities during Friday, during the day or the night, each week or on other days in the week suitable for such rites to be held as far as work or free-time for people to come is concerned. The people who come to such rites are frequently neighbours, friends or .relatives of the man who is holding these rites of remembrance

The practice has arisen of holding a session of the rites of remembrance in order to celebrate a new house by blessing it through remembering God, the Prophet and the .Imams of the Holy Family

Sometimes, some people hold a session of the rites of remem- brance when returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj) and on other personal occasions. The custom has also arisen of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn being part of an opening .session of a service for the dead or a gathering for commemoration

We can designate these kinds of rites as 'private

.'rites of remembrance' and the other we would term 'public rites of remembrance

Public rites of remembrance are held in public places: squares, large mosques, clubs and places dedicated to al-Husayn. A great number of people share in providing the finance for them. The money which they contribute is spent on the financial reward which is paid to the preacher and on the hospitality given to those who come to the rites of remembrance, in terms of sugar, coffee tea, etc. Money is also spent on hiring .or buying cushions and the cost of the electricity

These developments, which made the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn into occasions which were frequently held throughout the year and attracted a very great number of people, led to the setting up of special places for the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn called 'commemoration halls for al-Husayn' (al-husayniyya), 'clubs of .(al-Husayn' (al-nadi al-husayni

They are big halls specially devoted to the performance of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. In recent years they have come to be used for other religious, social and cultural occasions as well, such as farewell parties, parties in honour of people .and other such things

It seems that this institution is not a modern innovation but goes back to much earlier times. Amir 'Ali, in his A Short History of the Saracens, writes: 'One of the most imposing buildings in Cairo during the Fatimid period was the 'Husayniyya'. It was a building of vast size in which remembrance of the death of

(al-Husayn at the Battle of Karbala' was celebrated.(1)

The words of Amir 'Ali suggest that this was an official institution and that the Fatimid Caliphs used to take part directly in holding ceremonies of mourning for al-Husayn.

In the third stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, this institution has become a general phenomenon among Shi' ite Muslims In every Shi' ite town, small or big, whatever its economic state may be, there will be a building for this purpose which will be called either 'Husayniyya' or the club of al-Husayn (al-nadi al-husayni).

Large towns are distinguised by the fact that they include a number of commemoration halls for al-Husayn. Sometimes also in a great Shi'ite quarter in the big cities there are a number of commemoration halls for al-Husayn.

Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin has discussed this Shi'ite institution in his book, Khitat Jabal Amil. He writes: 'The halls of commemoration for al-Husayn were built in order to perform rites of mourning for Imam al-Husayn, the martyred grandson of the Prophet. The origin of these halls of commemoration for al-Husayn came from the Indians and the Iranians who built them in their towns. They also built them in Iraq.

They made religious endowments for them and provided overseers and superintendents for them. They consist of a building of stone with a courtyard and in them there is also a pulpit. A stranger may take refuge in them and the community provides him with accommodation. The poor also stay at them. Rites of mourning



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١- Amir 'Ali, A Short History of the Saracens.

for the Lord of martyrs are performed in them on a certain day each week and on the .first ten days of the month of Muharram

They differ in size, quality and income according to who was responsible for them being built. They were not known of before the present period in Jabal 'Amil. The first hall of commemoration for al-Husayn built in Jabal 'Amil was at Nabatiyya. Then a (number of other halls of commemoration for al-Husayn were built.'(١

This institution has now beome one of the established cultural phenomena in all Shi' .ite lands as we have already mentioned

These developments led to the growth of new religious endow- ments. Indeed these halls of commemoration for al-Husayn are endowed properties which bring public advantage. The chairs, cushions, chandeliers, electricity, lamps and equipment for making tea and coffee are all endowments. Similarly, endowments have been made for the banners and the black fabrics which are spread out and cover the walls of these halls of commemoration for al-Husayn and the mosques in which the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn are performed, although there are places which are not .covered by black fabric when the rites of remembrance are performed in them

At another level the number of men specifically concerned with this religious and cultural area has increased. One of these is called Arabic khatib (preacher or the preacher from the pulpit of al-Husayn). In Persian, Urdu and Turkish he is called rawzakhwan This really should be rawda-khwan but Persian pronunciation has



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.Muhsin al-Amin, Khitat Jabal Amil -١

.'changed the 'd' in Arabic to 'z

Khwan is Persian and means 'reading'. The meaning of this phrase then is 'the reading of al-Rawda'. Al-Rawda refers to the book Rawdat al-Shuhada ' (The Garden of Martyrs) which was compiled by Mawla al-Husayn ibn 'Ali al-Kashifi who was known .(as al-Wa'iz al-Bayhaqi (d. ۹۱۰

It is one of the books about the death of al-Husayn which was compiled at the beginning of the Shi'ite Safavid dynasty in Iran. It became so widespread among the people that it came to be introduced as the name for the preacher who kept alive the .memory of al-Husayn

It is necessary for these preachers to memorise the story of the Battle of Karbala', a great deal of information about Islamic history, especially the history of the early days of Islam, some stories of literature, a greater or lesser degree of knowledge of the interpretation of the Qur'an and Traditions about the merits of the Imams of the Holy Family. In addition to these, he would have to know a great deal of the poetry of .lamentation. It is desirable that some of this should be in the colloquial language

When the preacher has great knowledge of these subjects and is able to blend them together in a way in which the element of desire and benefit abound, he will be more .acceptable to the people

The practice is observed of fixing a time for the rites of remembrance which is in accord with the daily times of work

so that such rites are not held at working times. They are only usually ever held in the mornings very early before the work in the markets begins. However, these morning .sessions are attended by very few workers

When the rites of remembrance are held in the afternoon or evening there is a greater opportunity for all groups to take advantage of free time from work to attend them. As a result such public rites of remembrance held at those times are full of people. This is the case apart from what happens during the days of 'Ashura. As far as the latter are concerned, the rites of remembrance are held from the early morning .until late in the night

They are crowded with people attending because many of the people put off their work during these ten days in order to give themselves more time to devote to attending the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and listening to a number of .preachers

Here we should observe that the books about the death of al-Husayn are no longer a useful source for observing the changes in form and mode which have been .introduced into the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

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When we move from examining the changes in form which have occurred in the rites of remembrance such as them now being more openly held with a greater number of people attending, that they are now held at a great number of times and places with different equipment, with

preachers and at fixed times -when we move from examining such changes in form to an examination of changes in mode- we will notice that very important changes have occurred in this area which have made the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn a very :important force in the direction of society. We notice the following changes in mode

The rites of remembrance preserve an established element in which the tragedy is .۱ portrayed and the authorities criticised. However, the tragedy no longer forms a final and exclusive element in the rites of remembrance, even though it is still the principal element in them, especially with accomplished preachers speaking from the pulpit of .al-Husayn who enjoy very great popularity in educated and uneducated circles

Criticism of the authorities has also continued. There is still criticism with is aimed at the Umayyads and the'Abbasids and others who carried out unjust policies towards the Holy Family and their Shi' a. As for actual existing governments, these are sometimes criticised within the limits of the freedom granted to the preacher to speak .and express his views

In rare cases this criticism is unambiguous and direct. However, in most cases such criticism is indirect as was the case in all the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn which could be carried out in public within earshot of the authorities and .their organisations

Among the forms of criticism which we could term political criticism is the criticism of imperialism. In the modern period the Islamic world has suffered

the bitter experience of imperialism. It has awoken from the slumber of the dark ages which came over Muslims with the crash of the mortars of the imperialists and the .lash of their whips

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, as developed in this stage, were affected by this reality and reflected the anger and aspirations of the people suffering under imperialism. Some modern preachers have begun to deal with the problems of the people suffering under imperialism during the course of the rites of remembrance for .al-Husayn

۲. The language of the rites of remembrance in this stage has freed itself from the effects of the second stage in this area. It has got rid of rhyming prose and weak expressions. It has now become simple and easy to understand. Frequently the preacher uses colloquial in his speech from the pulpit for the benefit of the illiterate .and their like who cannot understand difficult texts

۳. Often the rites of remembrance include a historical exposition which contains the historical factors involved in the revolution of al-Husayn within the limits of the competence and the depth of culture of the preacher. It would deal with the Umayyad era from the time of the domination by Mu'awiya ibn 'Abi Sufyan, and perhaps even .from the time of the Caliph 'Uthman ibn'Affan sometimes

This historical aspect of the rites of remembrance concentrates the greatest extent of its concern on the following matters: (i) The transgressions by the Umayyads of the principles of Islam in their

policies in terms of their associations with opposition to Islam, with their attitude towards Muslims, with the treatment of public wealth, their breaking of their undertakings, their hostility to human morality as well as the way the private lives of most of them were full of immorality and indecency; (ii) Their oppression of the Holy Family, in particular, and the 'Alids, in general; (iii) Their oppression and persecution of .the Shi' a of the Holy Family

Abbasid history receives a great deal of attention when there is a session devoted to' the memory of one of the Imams who lived during the'Abbasid period. The speech of the preacher from the pulpit of al-Husayn will, on such an occasion, deal with the 'Abbasid Caliphs and their supporters in the same way as mentioned above but he will .not neglect to mention the Umayyads on every occasion

Historical Accuracy. Concern over historical accuracy has increased as a result of .۴ critical works that have been written by some distinguished scholars in recent years, and as a result of the awareness of what is fitting for the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn which has been propagated by some cultural institutions in Iraq and elsewhere. As a result of this, historically unreliable accounts have been kept away from and the preacher no longer mentions the speculations of some writers as if they .were historical facts

Among the most outstanding men who have participated in making preachers from the pulpit of al-Husayn stay close to historical accuracy and

who have worked to rid the account of the death of al-Husayn of fabricated embellishments was the late Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin. In the introduction to his book, :al-Majalis al-Saniyya, he wrote

However, many of those who mention their calamities, give different stories of . . .“ .their calamities

They distort some true accounts and add or subtract from them because of the influence they think they might have on the minds of their ignorant audience with sound and weak reports until these become preserved on men's tongues, deposited where men meet and spread unchecked among the people. They are lies which bring anger upon them and open the door of disparagement to anyone who wishes to disparage. They should not be pleased to tell lies which do not please God and His Apostle, for they have told their Shi'a, "Be an ornament for us. Do not be a disgrace to us." They, and those like them before, have committed a clear sin. God is not obeyed when He is disobeyed. God will only accept the pious. Lying is one of the grave sins which bring damnation, especially if it is against the Prophet and his pure Holy (Family.'(١

An example of the observation of historical accuracy in this stage is the comment of the late Sayyid'Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqrim when he mentions al-Qasim ibn al-Hasan going out to fight where he contradicts the widespread story that the Imam al-Husayn had married him to one of his daughters on the Day of 'Ashura,



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Muhsin al-Amin, al-Majalis al-Sanniyya fi Manaqib wa-Masa'ib al-Itra al-Nabawiyya -١ (٥th Edition, Najaf) ١, ۴. See also Muhsin al-Amin, Risalat al-Tanzih (٢nd Edition), ١۴,١٧-٢٠.

with the words: 'Everything mentioned about the wedding of al-Qasim is absolutely untrue because al-Qasim had no yet reached the age to marry. In addition there is no sound report about it in any of the historical sources.'(۱)

۵. Lessons in Islam and the call of Islam occupy a very important place in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. They reject the specious arguments of the atheists about Islam and the attack made by atheistic and immoral claims. Similarly the rites of remembrance are concerned with Qur 'anic and exegetical studies.

It usually happens that the preacher begins his speech with a verse from the Book of God which he then explains. He goes on from there to an Islamic study of doctrine or the Islamic way of life (shari'a) or morals or to give a defence of Islam against specious arguments. Then he goes on to discuss some aspect of Islamic history. Then he turns from that to mention some of the things which happened to the Holy Family. Finally he mentions Imam al-Husayn.

In many countries and over wide areas of public opinion, these lessons in Islam have become a standard which the people use in coming to the rites of remembrance or staying away from them. This standard will depend on the choice of a good preacher about al-Husayn.

۶. Perhaps it is appropriate here for us to point out a problem of procedure in the rites of remembrance of al-Husayn which has occurred, as we believe, in recent times. It



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۱- 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqrim, Maqtal al-Husayn (۱۳۹۶ A.H./۱۹۷۲ A.D.), ۳۲۰.

is what is called in Iraqi colloquial al-kariz (or al-guriz), which means 'leading up' to mentioning the tragedy of Imam al-Husayn. The rites of remem- brance now finish with that after having ceased to deal with everything which was involved in the rites .of remembrance for al-Husayn

What happens is that after the preacher finishes his talk about the religious, historical and social aspects together with the other elements which now constitute the rites of .'remembrance for al-Husayn, he begins to speak about Karbala

In this stage of the rites of remembrance, the preacher tries to create psychological tension and produce an emotion laden atmosphere among those listening to him which will make them weep. With the arrival of the moment of psychological tension which the preacher has succeeded in producing in the minds of those listening to him, .he does not move on to speak immediately about the tragedy

He only moves on to that stage by means of kariz (leading up) while he is concentrating on some incident which contains some similarity to one of the aspects of the tragedy of al-Husayn, which will allow a comparison to be made between the .tragedy and the aspect which was mentioned for the sake of the tragedy

In this way the listeners are not aware of the change in the situation and the movement from one atmosphere to another. Thus the speech glides imperceptibly .from the earlier subject into speaking about the predicament of al-Husayn

After that, the preacher enters into a detailed

account of the tragedy of al-Husayn by which he creates a psychological and emotional eruption. He finishes the session of the rites of remembrance by reciting a .line or two of poetry in the wailing style

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The technique of 'leading up' has been well-known in Arabic poetry from earliest times. It is based on the idea previously mentioned. Whenever the listener feels that he is living in an intellectually and psychologically homogeneous atmosphere through the gradual movement from one subject to another that is regarded as evidence for the success and good quality of the poet. Examples of 'leading up' in Arabic poetry are :too many to count. One such example is where Zuhayr ibn 'Abi Salma said

The miser is blameworthy wherever he is but the generous man grows decrepit on his .excuses

It seems that the need for the 'leading up' in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn arose out of the variety of the content and the number of subjects which the preacher from the pulpit of al-Husayn dealt with in his speech. We consider that this happened .in the third of the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

In the second of the stages, there was no pressing need for 'leading up' because the content of the rites of remembrance was usually homogeneous or almost .homogeneous; it had not matured in its development as happened in the third stage

Evidence for what we say can be seen in Shaykh Fakhr al-Din al-Turayhi’s book, al-Muntakhab. No sign of

p: ٣١٠

leading up' can be found in any of his sessions. The only reason for this is that the' rites of remembrance had only one subject; they had not yet witnessed the variety of .subjects which happened in the third stage

Social and educational problems. In their third stage the rites of remembrance .٧ began to deal with social and educational problems, sometimes directly and at other times indirectly.The preachers, who are outstanding in culture and endeavour, deal, in the speeches from the pulpit of al-Husayn, with the problems of social fragmentation arising out of domination by the residue of tribal and clan loyalties over society, with problems of social co-operation and economic solidarity and with problems of copying the West in its materialistic civilization and moral decline. In the same way they deal .with some of the problems of educating children and the programme of education

The preacher from the pulpit of al-Husayn deals with these problems by reporting clearly the ideas of Muslim and non- Muslim thinkers either mentioning the names of these thinkers or passing over them. Frequently the preacher's discussion of these problems will be an extension of his discussion about the doctrine and morality of Islam, or a refutation of the specious arguments which are raised against it, or a .comparison between the present situation of Muslims and their glorious past

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These are the changes which have occurred in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn during their third stage. Some of them concern their form and

.some are concerned with the contents of the rites of remembrance

During the third stage of the rites of remembrance they adopted a framework which now prevails with Muslim Shi'ites in most areas of the world, with only the existence of simple differences in some of the details between one area and another as the nature .of things would require

We think that the rites of remembrance in some ShI'ite areas may still preserve most of the characteristics of the second stage and have not yet gone completely beyond this stage. Perhaps this situation may be prevailing with the Shi' a in much of the Iranian countryside and in the country areas in India and Pakistan, together with .some areas in Asia Minor

**IV. The Present and Thoughts on The Future**

The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn are now in the most favourable situation. Competent men who specialise in them preach from the pulpit and not ignorant parasites as used to happen frequently. They are now one of the greatest Islamic cultural institutions in goodness and blessing through the active part they undertake .in awakening religious consciousness and spreading Islamic culture

They help reveal the treasures of our intellectual achievement and our civilisation. They provide true Islamic guidance amid the profusion of foreign intellectual, religious and social pressures on our inheritance and on our civilisation. These pressures represent a real intellectual attack which the West and the East together with those .seduced by them are carrying out against the Arab and Islamic world

If it is true that we recognise that the

social, political and civilisational developments which have taken place in the modern period, and especially in the last few decades, and which have participated in developing and directing the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn towards a positive response to the demands of this stage of confrontation which the Muslims now experience as a result of the challenges of imperialism and its intellectual on- slaught-if it is true that we recognise all that-then it is also true that we recognise the many noble efforts which have been made in order to give direction and bring harmony by those who act out of a conscious study of the needs of the age and of the way to .respond to those needs

If it had not been for these sincere efforts, the general changes in life would not have .borne fruit in the improvement in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

No one who is concerned with studying this problem can ignore the efforts of the late Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin who, by his pen and his personal conduct, actively participated .in development of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in numerous ways

No one who studies this subject can ignore the influence of his books, al-Majalis al-Saniyya fi Manaqib wa Masa'ib al-'Itra al-Nabawiyya, Iqna ' al-La'im, Lawa'ij al-Ashjan fi Maqtal al- Husayn and Risalat al-Tanzih fi A'mal al-Shabih.

Because of his efforts for the sake of this, he was exposed to defamation and violent attacks by many circles who used to consider any attempt at change

as a threat to the continuation of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and the other rituals associated with al-Husayn. Some of these circles went far beyond the .method of scholarly dialogue in their criticism and opposition

.However the changes have imposed themselves on everyone

If the ideas of Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin and those who agreed with him had not succeeded in connection with some of these theatrical manifestations like striking swords against heads, theatrical processions of beating in the streets and public squares, beating the shoulders and backs with chains . . . However, they did in fact succeed in forming a critical attitude towards the situation in which the rites of .remembrance then were

They shared in developing them greatly in content. In the same way they encouraged men with ideas about the future among the Shi'a to direct their attention towards the negative aspects of the festive manifestations and to suggest a framework to replace them.(۱)

In addition to the efforts of the late Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, cultural and learned societies and institutions in Iran and Iraq also shared in the success of the operation .of new developments which we now witness

The first in Iraq to call for new developments in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in accordance with the spirit of the age was the Society of the Publishing Club at Najaf. It leader was the late Shaykh Muhammad al-Rida al-Muzaffar and our brother Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim. Both men and their colleagues among the scholars of religious



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۱- In lectures, radio and television interviews and newspaper articles, we suggested that there be a change in actions like striking heads with swords on the Day of 'Ashura in the month of Muharram. This takes place in Iraq and elsewhere. We suggested that this action should be replaced by founding blood banks in the name of al-Husayn

where those desiring to shed their blood as an act of consolation could give it to the .sick, the wounded and the needy

science and literature had a clear vision of the problem and the means of solving it .with what would be in accord with the new changes

Among the aims of the Society of the Publishing Club was the foundation of a college to graduate preachers of the pulpit of al-Husayn who understood the changes, were aware of the circumstances of the times and were able to face them with a deep and unshakeable cultural basis, knowledge and objectivity, not with superstition and .bewilderment as used to happen on many occasions

However, in Najaf the call for changes was met by a ferocity of opposition which went beyond anything which could have been expected and raised sharp negative reactions in some circles. Yet those who made the call remained firm despite the fact that they were unable to realise their ambition to found a college to graduate .preachers of the pulpit of al-Husayn

They worked to spread the idea which met with acceptance and welcome in many quarters. One of the good results of this idea was the production of a number of outstanding preachers in the field of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn who have fortunately been well-received by the ordinary people and have achieved great .benefit. Their number has much increased in recent years. Thanks be to God

After that the Society for the Publishing Club founded the College of Jurisprudence and made this great aim as one of its aims which would bring scientific and cultural change. A group of

preachers, who specialise in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, who are conscious of the problems of the times and completely conversant with the tools and .conditions of their work, have graduated from it

It is something which makes me feel honoured and gives me great happiness that I - through the opportunities given to me- participated, with my colleagues on the teaching staff of the College of Jurisprudence, in a small part in that operation of .bringing about new developments

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. . . So much for the present

As for the future with regard to the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in particular and for the rituals associated with al-Husayn in general, we consider that, before mentioning some observations, we should turn our attention to one of the realities of history and civilisation with respect to all the institutions associated with civilisation .and especially with respect to the social and cultural institutions among the former

This reality is the fact that the social and cultural institution does not have an aim in itself. It is not an objective. Rather it is a means which has been created to participate in enriching mankind, ennobling his inner world and helping him to be in harmony with his external situation which is bursting with changes, through preserving for him his .spiritual and cultural personality

Since these are the functions of the social and cultural institution, it does not operate alone in the context of mankind in this age, nor does it conduct itself alone

with the man of its society. In every age, and in this age especially, this man is exposed to the influence of other social and cultural institutions, some external and some internal. The other social and cultural institutions have social and cultural .visions, and from there visions of civilisation which are not Islamic

These other institutions use the most modern means of information and influence and most efficacious techniques of persuasion to spread their attitudes and vision in the hearts and minds of people as a way of responding to the changes of the period by means of establishing their dreams of civilisation and by helping that through creating .these changes

For this reason a social and cultural institution which has an Islamic religious content must consciously understand the changes of its times. Through its consciousness, it must be flexible in order to respond to these changes by starting out from its own intellectual rules. This is because of the fact that, through its consciousness and its flexibility, it will have the ability to counteract what does not conform with its vision, .namely the ideas and attitudes which other social and cultural institutions propagate

In this way it will be able to correct them, to challenge them and to overcome them, or, at least, remain firm in the face of the challenges of those institutions. Then it will not lose its own people who will respond positively to the calls and requirements of .the situation

A social and cultural institution which has

an Islamic religious content must use the developing means of its time in order to be more effective and influential among the people whom it is addressing and with whom it is working, in order to be equal in ability with the other institutions which are competing with it, and in order to enable its activities to cover the whole area of its .people

This is accomplished through preserving the quality of character in the circumstances of the response to the requirements of the new situation. The requirements of the new situation should not prevail over the quality of character so that the institution .forsakes its true nature and its leaders abandon the essence of their mission

However, when a social and cultural institution becomes too rigid in preserving its old structure and traditional shape without paying attention to the changes which are taking place around it in life and in the people, using the slogan that it is afraid of losing its supports and it is concerned about the quality of sanctity in them -when a social and cultural institution does that- it faces one of two fates: Either it will gradually weaken until it dies because it has lost its own traditional people as they die without acquiring new people because the new generations will not put up with the vision and aspirations of the institution; or the institution will live on but will lose its quality of structure and mission and change into something under the name of ."folklore

At such a time it will lose the tools of intellectual structure and practical direction in relation to the people. It will only become a thing of amusement which attracts people in order to entertain them and it will never have any part in guiding and directing .them

Let us not think this odd. Many of the phenomena which are now termed 'folklore' in every nation are the remnants of cultural institutions which became moribund and did not interact with the changes during their times; they are the fragments of practices which, in the past, had a cultural significance which built and guided. When they lost their connection with life and aspirations of the people, they became something for .the entertainment of life after having been something serious in it

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Starting from this basic reality in the course of history and civilisation, we must face the challenges of the future with regard to the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn .with aspirations which will respond positively to these challenges and overcome them

We must adopt the attitude of careful consideration which we mentioned earlier, through the fact that adopting the logic of the new situation and responding positively to its requirements must be accompanied by a care for the quality of the character which preserves the religious sanctity and the spiritual and educational benefits of the .rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

:Within this understanding, we should observe the following matters

The justification for the evidence of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn .۱

must be preserved in them. This is the history of the revolution of Imam al-Husayn. This history cannot be removed from the rites of remembrance under the slogan of a new situation and the need to deal with pressing social and cultural problems. Indeed the revolution of al-Husayn must enjoy an appropriate share of the time devoted to :the rites of remembrance. In this connection, we should observe

a. That the revolution of al-Husayn comes within the scope of historical reality through mentioning its historical circumstances, causes and results without exaggerations, in an artistic language which is understandable to simple man, and far away from theatrical techniques, by putting it forward in terms of a psychological influence which arises as a result of an intellectual sympathy, not as the result of a .fanatical emotionalism

b. That complete sessions be devoted to studying the circumstances of the supporters of al-Husayn. The neglect of these noble martyrs who are constantly put in the background is one of the strangest phenomena in the rites of remembrance for .al-Husayn

Mentioning them should not only come incidentally in order to complete the special characteristics of the picture surrounding the Imam. Moreover the history of their participation in the revolution of al-Husayn is rich in possibilities which could make the life story of every one of them or the life stories of every group of them a starting .point for many educational and guidance ideas

Among the books about the death of al-Husayn, in their profusion, al-Muntakhab of

Shaykh Fakhr al-din al-Turayhi is alone in including some sessions devoted to the memory of these martyrs. We alluded to that in the last section on the ziyara and in .our discussion of the second of the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

c. That the role of women at Karbala' be shown in a clearer way than what happens at present. What happens now is characterised by two phenomena: (i) Attention is only focussed on some of the women- Zaynab, Sakina and al-Rabab; the others are completely ignored or are only mentioned incidentally. (ii) The presence of women at the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn is a purely emotional presence; the discussion of women at Karbala ' is now directed to serve an emotional purpose, not .an educational one

What we hope for is that the discussion of the role of women at Karbala' will include every possibility of obtaining historical information about the women who lived through the battle, whether they were 'Alid women or not. Concern in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn about the role of women at Karbala ' would turn attention towards the educational factors involved in their attitudes and reactions towards the events and their acceptance of the tragic end in the martyrdom of their .husbands, brothers, sons and fathers

We realise that the material for this discussion of women at Karbala' will need far-reaching historical research, which it has not been given up to now, in order to collect all the reports connected

p: ٣٢١

.with this subject and other aspects of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn

It is a study which ought to have been done centuries ago in respect to an institution which has lasted for more than thirteen centuries. Since it was not done in the past, it must be done now by those scholars who are concerned with the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. It would be possible for a select group of the preachers of the pulpit for al-Husayn, whom we know to be worthy of undertaking such .research, to share in this task

It is necessary to preserve the level of the people at the rites of remembrance as .٢ they develop in harmony with the changes in the times through the development of a .kind of rites of remembrance which answers the aspirations of the educated

It is to be feared that what happens now will lead to a kind of rites of remembrance which deals with intellectual, social and historical problems in a refined style which the illiterate and semi-illiterate, and even those who have mastered simple writing, will not be able to understand. This is one of the things which may lead these people to stop attending the rites of remembrance or will keep the circle of the rites of .remembrance in its second stage

What leads to this fear is that gifted preachers who have been given good opportunities to become proficient in their profession may strive to attain a standard which would make their people among

the cultured and educated group in terms of good education. This would cause them to neglect the vast majority of the people who attend the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn.

The ordinary preachers who have not been given the opportunities given to their colleagues will be limited to the kind of rites of remembrance which would still bear many of the characteristics of the second stage of the rites of remembrance.

This is something which would cause the educated not to attend their sessions and limit their people to the uneducated group which was exposed to the influences of the second stage of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and deprive them of the benefits of the rites of remembrance in their third stage.

For this reason we hope for a framework which will answer the needs of the educated and serve the ordinary people who attend the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn as well.

۳. What happens now, as in the past, is that the Shi'ite religious groups in Iraq, Iran and elsewhere put forward preachers to the pulpit of al-Husayn from among the men who prefer to follow that path rather than pursue academic attainment in the field of the studies of jurisprudence and the principles of religion.

This is what usually happens. There are rare cases when a preacher of the pulpit of al-Husayn who began his life in this field comes under the influence of a preacher of eminence in this connection.

At all events the group of men of

religious guidance is growing in a random fashion without planning and without programmes which will respond to the needs and the nature of the people so that .what we mentioned in the second section of these observations may happen

It will be impossible to overcome present and future difficulties without relying on planning and a proper programme. That will not be achieved without setting up an academic institution with two stages, secondary and higher, which will lay down .academic programme suitable for the needs of the people generally

Then there should be special programme which will embrace the cultured groups in which one human environment is distinguished from another where those preachers .specialise who practise their profession in a specific environment

For example, there may be some general basic academic programme in which all students in the institution will participate and there may be special additional programme for preachers who are likely to practise their profession in the Gulf. Such a programme would involve the special characteristics of Muslim culture in the Gulf. The same is the case with regard to Iraq, Iran, the Indian sub-continent and .elsewhere

Since the experiment of the Society of the Publishing Club met obstacles which prevented that experiment from seeing the light of day, perhaps circumstances are .now more favourable in other countries to undertake this experiment

Perhaps one of the things which will make it possible to get a clear view of the problems which face the pulpit of al-Husayn and its occupants, would be to

summon the leading men in the field of preaching from the pulpit of al-Husayn in every country to a general conference. There they could study together the problems of their profession, the ways to solve them and the methods which would guarantee .the development of new preaching techniques from the pulpit of al-Husayn

Possibly that should be preceded by local conferences of the leading preachers from the pulpit of al-Husayn. There they could study together the problems of their own special environment. Some of them could prepare studies on these problems, suggestions which could deal with the subject and the methods of solution. Later all could be summoned to a general conference which would lay down a comprehensive plan

۴. The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn held for women have remained in the same condition as they were in earliest times, as we observed at the beginning of our study of the stages of the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. Perhaps they have even declined and fallen behind what they were like when they began, when we observe the language and the prevailing nature of slapping in these rites of .remembrance

At this time, this situation has led to the fact that educated women and girls have stopped coming to these women's rites of remembrance because they do not find any benefit or advantage in them. In some respects this is true. If we make the exception of the benefit derived from remembering the tragedies of the Holy Family and renewing our emotional

.relationship with them, they do not have any other benefits

They do not offer any historical and cultural or Islamic religious advantages or anything else connected with religious culture. In the same way the fact that educated women have stopped coming to them because of their shallowness and the .manner of their practices, has made them limited to illiterate women and their like

This is what their people are losing continually and with speed in the countries where the education of girls is growing. If the position of the women's rites of remembrance remains like this, a time will come when they will die out and no longer have any .existence among the other rituals associated with al-Husayn

:In order for the women's rites of remembrance to develop, we hope for two changes

a. A group of educated women should be urged to embark on this task, that is, learning the appropriate poetry, the history of the revolution or al-Husayn and a suitable amount of general history together with Islamic and Qur 'anic culture which will enable them to undertake the preaching from the women's pulpit of al-Husayn. In this way the women's rites of remembrance for al-Husayn will be made appropriate .and capable of attracting educated women and their like

b. Women should participate in attending the men's rites of remembrance for al-Husayn. The pulpit of al-Husayn should not keep its spiritual and guiding benefits exclusively for men alone. The participation of women in these rites of remembrance would extend the area

of their influence and provide a large group of women with religious and cultural benefits which had not been available to them in their own special rites of .remembrance

It does not seem to us that there is anything to prevent the participation of women .with men in unified rites of remembrance apart from the mixing of the sexes

This is a matter which could be overcome by a simple change in the buildings of the commemoration halls for al-Husayn and the public halls in which the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn are held. Thereby the mixing of the sexes would be prevented and the participation of women in the rites of remembrance achieved. The means of broadcasting and the spread of modern electric power make something of .this kind easy

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These are the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn in their growth and circumstances, in the stages which they have passed through during more than thirteen centuries from the second half of the Islamic era until the end of the fourteenth century of that .era. They underwent changes during these stages until they settled in their last stage

These are our observations about the future which we are confident that if these are achieved, they will make the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn one of the greatest religious and cultural institutions in effectiveness and power to build man and society through ideas and consciousness. Thanks be to God, Lord of the Universe.These are our observations about the future which we are confident

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## Weeping

### The Phenomenon of Weeping

The phenomenon of weeping gives rise to much criticism. Despite the fact that it is not a phenomenon which is separate from the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, I was influenced to devote a special study to it in a section which would be separate from the studies of the rites of remembrance in terms of their methods and content. That .was in order to make it easier to observe and understand this phenomenon

Perhaps objectivity should require us to name this phenomenon 'the phenomenon of grief in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and in the memory of al-Husayn'. Grief is more general than weeping and those who grieve sometimes weep and .sometimes do not

We should note that grief and weeping are not matters of choice which a man can use when he wants and stop when he wants. They are matters which are external to the direct will of man. If he wants them, he must prepare the way for them by seeking to .recall what will generate feelings of grief in his heart and motives for weeping

In the same way we should

note that this phenomenon of grief is not something incidental in the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn and in the memory of al-Husayn. It is a deep-rooted phenomenon which cannot be separated from them. The rites of remembrance for al-Husayn were set up and established in order that the Shi'ite might express, in them, his grief for what happened at Karbala'. Such grief, in many circumstances, may .cause weeping

One of the later writers of an account about the death of al-Husayn, Ibn Tawus (d. ۶۶۴) observed that this memory ought to produce joy and happiness if there had not been a legal injunction for grief and weeping. He remarked: 'If it was not for the need to follow the Sunna and the Book of God in putting on the mark of sadness and tragedy because of the destruction of the signs of guidance and the foundation of the pillars of sin, out of sorrow for the happiness which we missed and out of regret for the submission of that martyrdom, . . . otherwise we have been clothed in the rewards of joy and glad tidings because of that great blessing. Insofar as there is in grief consent to authority by men and a purpose for pious men, we have put on the (garments of grief and accustomed ourselves to let our tears flow.'(۱)

Is weeping required for itself? Or is what is required grief, which may lead to weeping and which may not express itself in weeping while agony still



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.Ibn Tawus, al-Luhuf fi Qatla al-Tufuf, ۳ -۱

remains in the heart and anguish deep inside one? Or is what is required neither this nor that but something else which these two phenomena express, the psychological ?phenomenon of grief and the external phenomenon of weeping

During the following study, we shall attempt to become acquainted with this in terms .of its basis and its significance

### II. The Legal Texts

Very many texts have been reported from the Imams of the Holy Family from the time of Imam Zayn al-Abidin 'Ali ibn al-Husayn up to the awaited Imam, the Mahdi, which urge weeping for the fate of Imam al-Husayn. Whoever is unable to weep .should pretend to weep

Many of these texts contain an explanation of the great rewards which will come from God and the high places in the Hereafter for those who weep for Imam al-Husayn. The same is the case for those who cause men to weep for Imam al-Husayn, whether .by reciting poetry or in some other way

It is well-known that in Islamic law and the ethics of Islam, they do not encourage public demonstrations of grief for death and of distress and grief or the dead. Indeed that is considered reprehensible (makruh) and some of its manifestations are forbidden. However that does not apply to the weeping, sadness and distress which .occurs for Imam al-Husayn

Abu Hamza al-Thumah has reported from Imam al-Sadiq that he said: 'Weeping and grief are reprehensible for man in all occasions for grief except weeping and showing grief for al-Husayn ibn 'Ali. It is something which brings

'.reward

It seems that the underlying reason for the legality of this weeping and this grief, despite the reprehensible nature of other grief and even the prohibition of some kinds of it, is that this weeping and grief is not of a personal nature connected with human emotions which break out in sorrow for what has been lost. It is, rather, grief for a universal religious matter which includes Imam al-Husayn and his revolution. This grief is not an emotional attitude. It is an attitude based on principles by which the .believer expresses his adhesion and adoption of it through this emotional expression

## III. Analysis Of The Phenomenon Of Weeping

In order to understand the phenomenon itself, first of all, and in order to understand :its historical significance, we maintain the following

In remembering al-Husayn we come before a historical problem which we read about and listen to. In the light of this reality we face a definitive question: How do we write ?and tell of history

How do we write and tell the history of man who loves and hates like us who are alive, who fails and succeeds like us, who fills his heart with grief and happiness like us, who faces the greatest challenges and does not flee from them and does not resort to deceitful tricks against them but stands firm in the face of them, who is inflicted with the greatest disasters but faces them with heroism that has become legendary in ?history

How do we write and tell of the history of man? Should

we write about it as if we were writing a report on the economic situation? Should we write about the history of man as if we were writing about the history of the layers of the earth or the history of fossils? Should we change history into numerical lists and ?the analysis of numbers and the evidence for them

Or should we write and tell of history so that through it we may form a picture of the life of man who is made up of flesh and blood, aspirations and hopes, love and hatred, heroism and cowardice, high emotions and base desires, in one word, the history of ?man

I do not imagine that any scholarly and trustworthy researcher would allow himself to say 'no' to this, even though he claims that we ought to write and tell history in the .language of numbers

When history is written and told as the history of man, we should ask: How will we read and listen to history? Should we stop ourselves feeling happiness when we feel happy? Should we stop ourselves feeling sad when we feel sad? Should we stop ourselves feeling disgust when we feel disgust? I do not think that any scholarly and .trustworthy man would be pleased with himself to maintain that

We are like all people at all times and in all places. They write and tell history, read and listen to history so that they may be affected by what they listen to and read, whether it be sadness

or happiness, pleasure or disgust. It may make them feel proud so that they smile, or .it may make tears of sadness, pride and wonder flow from their eyes

Do we demand from history-or when we read or listen to a good story, or a fine poem, ?or a good play-that our hearts should not be affected by what we read and listen to

From all this the stupidity of all the criticism which is made about the phenomena of grief at the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn should now be clear to us, as should .the superficiality of the way in which this problem is dealt with

In the rites of remembrance for al-Husayn, we listen to a historical portrayal of a tragedy whose like history has not witnessed, in which holy men were killed and raised to the highest ranks in dedication and self sacrifice as they made a pure gift of their lives and in which women and children were killed as they were parched with thirst, far from home and isolated. Their heads were carried away and their womenfolk taken captive. All this happened not for the sake of their own persons but .for the sake of their umma and their faith

Their umma is something which we are part of. Their faith is the faith which we embrace. It is our right, as fellow human beings, to grieve, to be amazed, to complain while the grief grows greater within so that we shed tears of grief and

.wonder and gratitude

There remains for us to show the historical significance of this phenomenon. It will become clear to us when we are aware that the Imams of the Holy Family were the leaders of the Islamic mission-a leadership which opposed any deviation in understanding and applying Islam. They were always on the watch for every .deviation and transgression which came from the ruling authorities

How many indeed were their deviations and transgressions! As a result their attitude constantly put them in the position of a resolute opponent. The reaction of the authorities was violence, prosecution and persecution against the Imams of the Holy Family and their followers. Sometimes the persecution became so extensive that it .went beyond the persons of the Imams and their families and included all the 'Alids

An example of that is the actions of al-Mutawakkil-as reported to us by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani in Maqatil al Talibiyyin: 'Al-Mutawakkil could not endure to learn that anyone should show any kindness to any of the Talibids, even the smallest, without ruining him with punishment and weighing him down with debt so that it came about that there was only one dress for a group of 'Alid women. They would perform the salat in it, one after the other. Then they would take it off and sit naked at their '.spinning-wheels

We are, then, in front of a belief in persecution which pursues the persons of leaders and followers in a barbaric way that compels them to hide their faith

in order to preserve their lives. One of the things which is clear both socially and psychologically is that intellectual conviction, alone, in faith will not guarantee that one will stand firm and resolute in the face of great dangers and violent persecution which .goes on century after century

Such continuous destructive violence and persecution, which did not stop for anything, soon shattered the people's cohesion around their beliefs when these people did not have the freedom and security. It was not always possible for them to remain in complete contact with these beliefs and these attitudes. It was not possible .for them to live their lives openly in accordance with their beliefs

In addition to this we must introduce into our calculation the fact that there did not seem to be any hope of an early relaxation of his predicament to the ordinary Shi' ite individual. We must also take account of the fact that the persecution of the Shi'a did .not completely stop in the course of history until the last few decades

We should be aware of the fact that the noble revolution of Karbala' represented the apex of the attitude of opposition which the leaders of the Holy Family led against deviation in understanding and applying Islam. It was the result of a chain of previous .actions and the beginning of a chain of actions which were to come after it

Through its distinguished personality it revealed with absolute clarity the nature of the struggle between the

Holy Family and their opponents and the aims of this struggle. It was rich, to the .highest degree, in elements of human nobility and emotional awakening

For the sake of the Shi'a remaining in living contact with the fundamental ideas and - principles of the struggle between the Holy Family and their opponents

For the sake of them having continually an extraordinary high ideal of self-sacrifice - for truth and justice

For the sake of adding to the intellectual conviction in the faith an emotional bond, which would give that intellectual conviction an enthusiasm, a power and an illumination in the face of persecution and an ability to endure tribulations, which would preserve a cohesiveness in the face of violent attacks, and which would surround the rational attitude with an emotional fire which would raise that belief - from the rational level to the emotional level

For the sake of all that, the Holy Family called for poetry to be composed about al-.Husayn and his revolution and they called for his memory to be kept alive

This has been a discussion of the revolution of al-Husayn and its impact on Muslim consciousness. This memory will remain as a living ideal which, through its resounding magnificence, its exalted call, its noble self-sacrifice, will stir the hearts and .consciences of men

It will remain ringing in the heart of history with the words of the Lady Zaynab to Yazid ibn Mu'awiya while she was a captive and he was a Caliph: 'Conspire as much as you can

and exhaust yourself with your efforts, for by God, you will never wipe out memory of us. You will not bring to an end our revelation. Disgrace will never leave you. Is your judgment anything except blunder? Are your days anything except a number? Is your grouping together anything but a scattering apart?'

p: ۳۴۲

## About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism-places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,-web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and-English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,-WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

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